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Monday, January 28, 2019

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, January 28, 2019

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

• (1105)

[*English*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Speaker: My dear colleagues, I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

Today, members of the 42nd Parliament gather for the first time in this magnificent interim chamber. This space is a unique marriage of tradition and modernity, of the familiar and the new. Our parliamentary work resumes this morning without interruption, which is no small feat when we consider the scale of effort required to move many of the occupants and contents of the Parliament buildings into West Block.

The employees of the House administration, the Library of Parliament, the Parliamentary Protective Service and Public Services and Procurement Canada have moved mountains, almost literally, to be ready for us today. While there will inevitably be growing pains as we settle into our new space, I know that we will soon make ourselves at home and continue the important work of representing the people of Canada.

Therefore, on behalf of the exceptional team that made this restored West Block a reality, welcome to the new House.

* * *

[*Translation*]

VACANCY

NANAIMO—LADYSMITH

The Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that a vacancy has occurred in the representation, namely Ms. Sheila Malcolmson, member for the electoral district of Nanaimo—Ladysmith, by resignation effective Wednesday, January 2, 2019.

Pursuant to subsection 25(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed a warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ for the election of a member to fill the vacancy.

[*English*]

It being 11:05 a.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

DUTCH HERITAGE DAY

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, in recognition of the sacrifices made by Canadians in the liberation of the Netherlands, as well as the contributions made to Canada by those of Dutch heritage, the government should recognize every May 5 as Dutch Heritage Day to honour this unique bond.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will begin my speech by saying what a rare privilege it has been to serve as the member of Parliament for the riding of Chatham-Kent—Leamington these past 13 years. As I begin my final year, I would like to thank them as well as my family, and especially my wife Faye, who is here this morning in the House, for the support and encouragement they have given me throughout these years.

However, I rise today to submit my private member's motion, Motion No. 207.

Today in Canada, approximately one million people can trace their roots to the Netherlands, and they can be found right across Canada. There were three main waves of Dutch immigration that made their way to Canada from Holland. The first wave, from 1892 to 1911, saw a small group of men come across from the United States where they had first emigrated to from Holland. The lure of free land and the opportunities of the new frontier brought them to Alberta, and a few years later, approximately one hundred people followed them. They joined with Hungarians, Icelanders, Romanians, Chinese people, Ukrainians, Jews, Mennonites, Doukhobors, Britons, Belgians, Americans and Poles, who were told that the land was free and if you worked hard you would prosper.

The next wave of Dutch immigrants came in the period between 1923 and 1930. Some in this group went out west but the majority came to Ontario. It is estimated that from these two groups, approximately 25,000 Dutch immigrants entered Canada. In my riding of Chatham-Kent—Leamington, families like the Lugtigheids, Bruinsmas and the Vellingas can trace their roots to this group.

Private Members' Business

The last group, or third wave, came after the Second World War. This was the largest group of immigrants, numbering over 140,000 people who came between 1947 and 1960. They settled across Canada in every province except Newfoundland. The first part of that group came mainly from the agricultural sector. Large families like the DeBrouwer, Postma, Hoekstra and Vandersluis families came to my riding and worked on farms, as well as many others who did the same across Ontario, the maritime and western provinces. The Eking family was one of those who settled in the Maritimes and the Viersen family is an example of those arriving out west.

My wife Faye's parents were in the latter part of that group. Harm and Antje Dekens arrived in 1952 as newlyweds and came to Orangeville where they met their sponsors and employers, Harry and Margaret Brown. Although they were employees, they were treated like family and remained close friends throughout their lives. Like many other Dutch immigrants, Harm, or Harry as he became known, soon saw the opportunities that this county offered. He bought a farm in Acton and started work at Ontario Steelworks in Milton, Ontario, working day and night to establish himself and his young family while Ann cared for the children at home. His work ethic at the factory propelled him to the position of general foreman, but his love for farming culminated years later in establishing Harry and Ann as successful dairy farmers.

Their story could be duplicated hundreds of times over so that today across Canada Dutch immigrants are found farming on some of the most successful farms in the country, having passed down their skills to the first, second and even third generation of farmers. Labourers continued to arrive working in construction and factories as well as professionals, filling the need for thousands of occupations across Canada.

Along with these immigrants, Canada also paid for the passage of nearly 2,000 Dutch war brides and their children. Dutch Catholics and Protestants of the reformed tradition all had their links to their creeds and traditions. Today, we find a large string of Christian grade schools, high schools and even accredited post-secondary schools across Canada. The rate of assimilation is almost complete with Dutch immigrants. In the 2016 census, 104,505 people reported Dutch as their mother tongue, down 11,000 from 2011.

• (1110)

We share many things with the Dutch as a nation. Both countries practice the parliamentary system of government. Bilateral trade is flourishing between the two countries. The Netherlands is Canada's fifth largest trading partner. In 2016, trade in goods between the two countries was estimated at \$6.5 billion and in 2017 that climbed to \$7.5 billion.

Many Canadian and Dutch companies and institutions co-operate in areas such as urban planning, health care, agriculture and green energy. In my riding, where one finds the largest collection of greenhouses in North America, we have benefited greatly from the Dutch, who are the largest greenhouse growers in the world and leaders of greenhouse technology globally.

Today in Canada, 30% of all immigrant-run greenhouses are operated by Dutch immigrants. In my riding, families like the Verbeeks, Devries and Geertsemas would be examples of this group. One quarter of all immigrant-run nursery operations are run by

Dutch immigrants. My brother Charlie and his wife Colleen Van Kesteren were examples of this skilled group.

The two countries enjoy visa exemptions and as a result Dutch citizens can travel visa free for up to six months in Canada, which has become a travel destination for Dutch tourists since 90% of Dutch citizens today can speak English.

We have entered into many bilateral agreements in the past with the Dutch as well, such as the UN ban on landmines in 1996. We fought side by side in Afghanistan. We co-operate in many foreign aid projects in third world countries. All in all, it is a bond of friendship that continues to grow as both countries mutually participate in a world of shared values.

However, our greatest bond began back in 1940 during World War II when the Dutch royal family took refuge in Canada and lived in Ottawa during the war. The Nazis had overrun Holland and after bombing Rotterdam to oblivion the Dutch government surrendered, facing the threat of the same bombing of all of their cities. The future Queen Juliana gave birth to her daughter Margriet in an Ottawa hospital, where the room was designated Dutch soil, and later that day the Dutch flag flew up on the Peace Tower, the first and last time a flag other than the Canadian flag has flown there.

Then as destiny would have it, Canadians found themselves fighting for the liberation of the Netherlands in 1944 and on May 5, 1945, after fierce fighting, Holland was made free once again. Seventy-six hundred Canadians died in the nine-month campaign to liberate the Netherlands, a tremendous sacrifice in the cause for freedom in battles such as the Battle of the Scheldt and the Liberation of Arnhem. At Randstad, where the people suffered from the horrific effect of war, 18,000 died from starvation and it would have been a far greater number were it not for Canadians who both collected food and provisions at home and Canadian airmen who dropped thousands of packages in Operation Manna.

In appreciation, the Dutch began to send tens of thousands of tulip bulbs every year, the Dutch national flower, followed by thousands more by the Dutch royal family. The donations became an annual tradition, resulting in the Canadian Tulip Festival here in Ottawa.

Each year, Canadian Veterans make a pilgrimage to the Netherlands and lay poppies at the graves of their fallen comrades. Each year, Dutch children along with their parents lay flowers and tend the graves of the cemeteries and memorials like Bergen-op-Zoom Canadian War Cemetery, Groesbeek Memorial, Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery, Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Holten Canadian War Cemetery, Jonkerbos War Cemetery, Liberation Forest, Kamp Westerbork, The Man with Two Hats, and Uden War Cemetery.

Private Members' Business

Today, as then, “Thank you, Canada” is heard both in the Netherlands and by the many Dutch immigrants who have made this country their home.

On October 25, Prime Minister Mark Rutte addressed the Canadian Parliament, the first Dutch prime minister to do so. At the beginning of his speech he honoured World War II veteran Mr. Don White, a member of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, who helped liberate the Netherlands from Nazi occupation.

• (1115)

The prime minister said that this is what Don wrote to his parents on April 17, 1945:

We have liberated a number of Dutch towns and you never saw anything like it in all your life. Once the Germans have been driven out and you enter the town, the people come out and put up their flags and royal colours. They crowd around the cars so badly you can hardly move. Your car is just one big bouquet of flowers that has been given you. The girls kiss you and the men shake your hand off. There is a lot so happy they cry.

The prime minister continued:

Don and his comrades risked their lives so that we could be free. He survived, but more than seven thousand six hundred young Canadian servicemen did not. They made the ultimate sacrifice, and the Netherlands is their final resting place. So yes, we feel deeply connected with Canada, and we are forever grateful to those brave Canadian soldiers who carried the light of freedom to our country in its darkest hour.

This we will never forget.

Thank you, Canada.

My parents came to this country in 1953 with five children. They came to a strange land with a different language and customs, a land wide open and vast, so different from the one they left. They arrived in May 1953 at the docks of Pier 21 in Halifax and were issued a train ticket to Chatham, Ontario, where they were greeted at the CP train station by the Van Rynes, their sponsor family, with whom they shared a small house, together with the Van Rynes' five children, for a month until my parents found a one-bedroom house they rented in the country. Life was challenging, to say the least. They were not always treated kindly by their neighbours, who I am sure were suspicious of these intruders.

Times were tough for Canadians as well, and resentment flared up when newcomers challenged them for jobs. Memories of the war were fresh. Some people had lost loved ones fighting in their land. However, they were not unique in their attitudes toward immigrants. There were Italian fathers who laboured for years in places like Sault Ste. Marie before they could bring their families to Canada. There were Polish families, Czechoslovakians, Belgians, Hungarians, Romanians and Germans, many of them refugees, all struggling with the strange customs and difficult language.

This is a land of immigrants. Every group in southwestern Ontario, from the highland Scots to the Irish and then later on to the Europeans, would have to struggle and gain their place amongst the English and French who first carved out a place in the wilderness. It is the very nature of our country. We are all immigrants, and we all owe our unique existence to this rich and diverse country.

Over time and through hard work, faith and commitment, the Dutch became Canadian. Today, the children of Dutch immigrants number amongst farmers, contractors, teachers, accountants, doctors, lawyers, business people and, yes, even members of Parliament. Each one of these consider themselves to be Canadian. Yes, they are

of Dutch descent first but are foremost Canadian. Many times I would hear my mother proclaim:

[Member spoke in Dutch and provided the following translation:]

I am so thankful that I may live in this country.

[English]

I, too, am thankful that our parents chose this country, thankful that we can share in the pride of remembrance of the lives sacrificed by the men and women who fought to liberate the land of our heritage, and thankful for the bond that has grown and continues to grow between these two countries.

It has been said that the Dutch are amongst those who best integrate into new societies. Of all the immigrants I grew up with, I know of none who kept or bought homes in the old country and, with the exception of one or two, none who returned to their former home. I remember growing up hearing:

[Member spoke in Dutch and provided the following translation:]

We are now in Canada.

[English]

Dutch Canadians love this country and consider it their home. They came from a country that loves this country and considers Canadians their greatest friends. On May 5 this year, and from this year on, let us celebrate this unique bond.

• (1120)

It is my hope that, in the establishment of Dutch heritage day, Canada recognizes the voice of a grateful nation that says, “Thank you, Canada” and in response Canadians recognize what the Netherlands has given to us and say, “Thank you, Holland”.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from my colleague across the way. The Prime Minister has often said that one of Canada's greatest strengths is our diversity. When I listened to the member across the way talk about immigration and the impact the Dutch people have had on Canada, it is very profound. I always enjoy the opportunity to talk about what the Prime Minister quite often talks about, which is Canada's diversity.

My question is related to that. As my colleague and friend reflects in his remarks and we look at the depth of heritage, we see that Canada's heritage is not stagnant. In fact it continues to grow day after day, as our diverse heritage has so much to offer. That diversity is one of the reasons we are today classified as one of the best countries in the world in which to live. Today we emphasize the important contributions of the Dutch community and the diversity it brings to Canadian heritage. I wonder if my friend would like to provide his thoughts on the Dutch Canadian heritage as a direct result of immigration from the Netherlands.

Private Members' Business

In the Second World War as a whole, more than 200 indigenous soldiers lost their lives.

Indigenous soldiers earned a minimum of 18 decorations for bravery in action. They participated in every major battle and campaign, from the disastrous Dieppe landings to the pivotal Normandy invasion and the Battle of Hong Kong, where 2,000 members of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada became prisoners of war of the Japanese. At least 16 of those prisoners were first nations people and Métis.

In September 1944, only three months after D-Day, Canadians began the campaign that would liberate the Netherlands from Nazi occupation. As I mentioned previously, some of these brave soldiers were indigenous and gave their all for the freedom that Dutch people deserved.

I would like to highlight Saskatchewan's David Greyeyes, originally a grain farmer from the Muskeg Lake Cree band. He began his service in Great Britain, giving advanced weaponry training to reinforcements. He served in Italy, France, Belgium and, of course, the Netherlands.

• (1130)

Another noteworthy soldier was Charles Byce, who was the only member of his regiment, the Lake Superior Regiment, to earn both the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal. He was the son of Louisa Saylor, a Cree from Moose Factory, Ontario. Byce earned his first decoration for valour, the MM, in the Netherlands in January 1945. The story behind this award is quite amazing.

These brave men are all heroes to all Canadians. I cannot thank them enough for their hard work in keeping our country safe. As the relationship between Canadians and those of Dutch heritage grows deeper, let us not forget the contributions indigenous people made as well for the people of the Netherlands. I am honoured to speak in the House in support of recognizing every May 5 as Dutch heritage day to honour this unique bond between the Dutch, Canadians and indigenous people. We thank our friends of Dutch heritage for their tremendous contributions to our country. To our incredible soldiers who put their lives on the line for the freedom of the Dutch people and Canadians across the country, we are forever grateful. Again, I am thankful.

• (1135)

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and an honour to stand in this new chamber today, the first member of the New Democratic Party to debate in the House of Commons in West Block. It is also fitting that in this new place, the first order of business is to debate a motion recognizing our past, our heritage and who we are.

The House of Commons, in many ways, is the physical embodiment of our democracy. Following the fire of 1916, the House of Commons in Centre Block heard parliamentarians debate and shape Canada for over 100 years.

With the motion before us, we are teaching this new place those lessons, teaching this new institution how it is that we have come to be who and where we are today. Motion No. 207 would designate

May 5 as Dutch heritage day. Doing so would recognize the sacrifices made by Canadians in the liberation of the Netherlands and the past, present and future contributions made to Canada by Canadians of Dutch heritage.

It is a very fitting motion to be the first debated here, and one that I and my New Democratic Party colleagues fully support. I believe that heritage motions present us with an opportunity to not just learn about our past but to find ways to act on those lessons. They also provide us with a chance to see what those connections look like today and what we can continue to learn from those nations and cultures.

The bond Canada and the Netherlands share is a unique one that will forever tie our two nations together. Motion No. 207 would designate May 5, because it is Liberation Day in the Netherlands.

During World War II, from September 1944 to April 1945, the Netherlands were under Nazi occupation. Canadian forces led the allies' effort to liberate the Dutch people. More than 7,600 Canadians gave their lives in that effort and are forever resting in war cemeteries across the Netherlands.

On May 5, 1945, Royal Canadian Regiment General Charles Foulkes accepted the German surrender of the Netherlands. While the winter of 1945 was known as "hunger winter" and saw millions of Dutch people in suffering and starvation, the summer of 1945 was called "Canadian summer". It was marked by weeks of parties, parades and celebrations.

The efforts and sacrifices made by the Canadian military to liberate the Dutch people is something that neither country will ever forget. However, learning this history also provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the work that still needs to be done to respect and live up to the solemn promise we have made to all our military veterans. My colleagues, the member for Courtenay—Alberni and the member for London—Fanshawe, have been tirelessly pushing the government to treat our veterans with the respect and dignity they deserve. This is something both Liberal and Conservative governments continue to fail on.

I was proud to see the member for Courtenay—Alberni's motion to have lapsed Veterans Affairs department funding reallocated and actually spent on veterans pass in November of 2018. It will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in funding actually used for service provision.

During World War II, Canada also provided refuge to the Dutch royal family, but we did not simply provide a safe haven. In 1943, the maternity ward of the Ottawa Civic Hospital was briefly declared to be extra-territorial by the Canadian government, allowing Crown Princess Juliana's child, Princess Margriet, to be born only a Dutch citizen.

Private Members' Business

While we could look back on this as just a diplomatic gesture to foreign royalty, I believe it shows much more and provides us with a lesson that becomes more important with each passing day. Across the western world, immigration, and especially refugee resettlement, has become a very divisive debate. Some people, even in this place, seek to misinform Canadians about refugees and label them drains on society that have little to offer Canada. Some even call them illegal.

The Dutch royal family shows us that refugees come from all walks of life, from the poor to royalty. When a family is in immediate danger, it may have no choice but to flee and seek asylum. As we reflect on how Canada can best contribute to finding solutions to the global refugee crisis that now sees over 65 million forcibly displaced persons globally, let us all remember Canada's humanitarian legacy and the lesson the Dutch royal family can teach us: anyone can become a refugee.

● (1140)

Canada can and must do better, not just in providing asylum but in showing refugees the respect and dignity they deserve by ensuring that they have access to the services needed to get on their feet and thrive here.

Our cousins, as the Dutch Prime Minister considered us in his historic address to the House of Commons in the fall, continue to innovate and make contributions to the world. According to the 2016 census, over 500,000 Canadians are of Dutch ethnic origin. The 2006 figures, which include full or partial ancestry, put that number as high as one million. Many Canadians maintain strong ties to the Netherlands. For that reason, it makes sense to look to our Dutch neighbours to see what new lessons can be learned.

Despite promising that 2015 would be the last election under first past the post, our Prime Minister abandoned that promise and refused to work with MPs on electoral reform. In a bizarre excuse for his failure, the Prime Minister suggested that proportional representation could give fringe views the balance of power in our democracy. If only he were more aware of our Dutch counterparts. The 2017 Dutch election showed just the opposite.

The Dutch PR system makes it difficult for a single party to obtain a majority mandate and forces parties to work together and compromise. Despite it winning the second most seats in the 2017 election, no other party is willing to work with the Party for Freedom, a party considered by many to be a far right, anti-immigrant, nationalist party. As a result, this extreme view holds no power, as it is not supported by the majority of Dutch people.

The PR system also helps send more women to parliament, with 36% of seats held by women. That is 10% higher than in Canada. Making every vote count may also very well improve voter turnout. In 2017, over 80% of Dutch voters cast ballots, and turnout typically hovers in the 70% range. In 2015, we saw Canada's highest turnout in over 20 years, but that was only 68.5%.

Last, despite our Prime Minister's lofty rhetoric on the environment, we know much remains to be done to even come close to meeting our Paris targets. We also know that buying a 65-year-old leaky pipeline does not help us hit those targets.

However, what we do know about are ways that will help. For example, we could be making investments in our communities to make our streets safer and more accommodating for cyclists and pedestrians. The Netherlands has long been famous for its embrace of urban cycling culture and has made significant progress in moving away from city planning around the car. This has made its streets safer, greener and more pedestrian and bike friendly.

In 2016, my colleague, the member for Courtenay—Alberni, tabled Bill C-312, an act to establish a national cycling strategy. His bill would see the federal government work collaboratively across departments and with the provinces and territories to develop and implement a national framework for improving urban cycling infrastructure and programs across Canada. I hope parliamentarians can learn from our Dutch counterparts and better embrace urban cycling. Supporting Bill C-312 would be a great first step.

Canadians can be very proud of our country's Dutch heritage and shared history with the Netherlands. I encourage all Canadians to learn more about it. It is very clear to me that we can learn many valuable lessons from this heritage and our continued close relationship. We can learn from the past. We can learn from the present. I have no doubt that there will be lessons we can learn in the future as well.

● (1145)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I come from a long line of Dutch heritage, and one thing I know about the Dutch comes from a saying that we have: “wooden head, wooden shoes, wouldn't listen”. The Dutch are notoriously stubborn, and I know this not because I know lots of Dutch people but because the Dutch looked out at the ocean and they said, “There is good farmland under there”, and they dammed it off and started farming the sea floor.

One of the things we are recognizing today is the liberation that happened in Holland on May 5, 1945, in which Canada played a very important role. One thing my grandparents tell me about is running through the streets as children saying, “The Canadians are here. The Canadians are here. The war is over.” That moment has very much tied the Canadian and Dutch identities together, I think forever.

However, Canada and the Dutch have had a relationship that goes back long before then. I know that Dutch stubbornness has worked well in Canada, given the odds that we have to overcome in terms of the climate and the vast distances that we deal with here in Canada.

Private Members' Business

I would like to reference how Canada has been shaped by some of our Dutch culture. One of things I wanted to point out was the word “cookie”. Some members may have had a cookie this morning. I am not sure if members know this, but that word is not necessarily an English word. It comes from the Dutch word “*koekje*”. In North America, we call a biscuit a cookie, but the English had no term for this whatsoever. “Cookie” is very much a North American term that comes from the Dutch term “*koekje*”, so if any members had a cookie this morning, they can thank the Dutch heritage in North America for that cookie. We just take it for granted here in North America that a cookie is a cookie, but at the turn of the century, the English did not understand at all what a cookie was. They thought it was a biscuit. They would still tell us today that it is called a biscuit. That is interesting.

My wife's grandfather was married to an English lady, so the cultural differences are always very fun to ask her about. One of the other things she said was that the Dutch would offer people coffee right as they came through the door. She said that in the English culture, people would be offered coffee as a way to kick them out the door, so to speak. People would be offered wine as they came in, and then they would be offered coffee as a signal for them to leave. She said those kinds of things were very weird, just as the term “cookie” was weird.

The other thing that we do not necessarily realize is that the name “Santa Claus” comes from “Saint Nicholas”. The Dutch call him “*Sinterklaas*”, and “Santa Claus” is an anglicization of the term “*Sinterklaas*”, so Santa Claus is actually one of the Dutch heritage pieces that we use here in North America and in Canada. Members can thank the Dutch for Santa Claus. His red suit comes from that heritage as well. That is amazing.

When the Dutch came to Canada, they came from all walks of life in the Netherlands, but many of them ended up farming here in Canada. There was a great need for farming employees, particularly in the 1950s when most of them came, so they ended up farming. They would have been accountants, school teachers, police officers and so on, but when they came to Canada, there was not a need for those kinds of skills: there was a need for farm labourers.

I remember reading and hearing stories about how accountants who came here wore their hands to the bone in a week picking rocks and other things, and living in chicken coops. They were really anxious about the fact that they had decided to leave an extremely organized country to move out in the wilderness of Canada, even though the people who moved here thought we lived in modern civilization.

●(1150)

However, the Dutch people did not sit still in those positions. Usually within a couple of years, they had moved up in the world. They were building their own houses, churches, and schools all across Canada. The data that we have, particularly for the 1950s, shows there was quite an immigration into every province in Canada, and they built communities everywhere.

That was particularly in the 1950s era. However, the Dutch people were involved in the building of Canada going way back before that as well, even before the liberation that really married the Dutch and Canadian cultures in 1945.

Going back, the railway was built by Dutchmen. It no doubt was an idea of Sir John A. Macdonald's, which had started and stopped several times. It was not until a gentleman by the name of William Van Horne showed up on the scene that the transcontinental railway was finally completed. He started out as a 15-year-old working in the rail yards and ended his career as the president of CP Rail. He was known as the president to run a locomotive.

Another thing he was known for was that he never slept. He had several aides. At one point in time, his aides took turns staying awake to see if he actually fell asleep. He stayed awake for three days consecutively to prove to them that he never slept. They never saw him sleep. They said he played cards every day until two o'clock in the morning and was up before the crack of dawn. He was a man larger than life who built the railway through the entire country. If there is something that really binds this country together, it is the national railway. It is not without its controversy, but it really galvanized us as a nation. I would say there was a stubborn Dutchman right there in the middle of all of that.

As well, there was a famous contractor named Andrew Onderdonk, who was also very much involved with building the B.C. portion of the railway.

Those are two Dutchmen who were very much involved in the building of the railway.

The Dutch and Canadian cultures are dramatically intertwined, specifically around the liberation of Holland, and here in Canada we have seen multiple communities of Dutch heritage spring up across the country. I come from a small Dutch community up in northern Alberta called Neerlandia. It was founded in 1912, long before the Second World War, but most of the people came after the Second World War.

It is interesting that Dutch people are as free market as they come. The stock exchange model was first developed in the Netherlands and then brought to North America. Interestingly, we are not emphatic about it.

The community of Neerlandia has one of the largest co-ops in the country. All our fertilizer, fuel, groceries, and those kinds of things come through the local co-op that we have set up there. Our co-op is almost like a religion there, as everyone is a member of it.

Those are some of the things the Dutch have done to contribute to the building of Canada. Canada has been an amazing home to nearly a million people who claim Dutch heritage, and we look forward to continuing to build this country with new homes, new churches, new schools and all the great things we need here in Canada.

I look forward to the passage of this bill and to celebrating May 5 as Dutch heritage day.

●(1155)

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the chamber to speak on Motion No. 207.

Private Members' Business

Before I begin, I would like to commend the Speaker, the staff, the contractors and Parliament Hill security for this big endeavour to get us set up here in the time they had to do it. Just an hour ago, when we were coming in, they were still changing the bulbs and adjusting the microphones. It was great to be here for the opening just a couple of hours ago, with Algonquin first nations doing a smudging, blessing this place and wishing us all well.

I am here today to speak on a motion to establish May 5 of every year as Dutch heritage day. I share this heritage with my friend from Chatham-Kent—Leamington and many others in the chamber and, of course, millions of Canadians who have Dutch roots and live across this wonderful country. This day would recognize the significant bond between the two countries, the Netherlands and Canada, one that was established by the sacrifices of many Canadians in the liberation of the Netherlands, as well as the contributions made in Canada by people with Dutch heritage.

I am from Cape Breton, which had one of the largest per capita enrolments in World War II. Many of those soldiers are buried in Holland. I am very proud to represent the people of Sydney—Victoria in Cape Breton, who put me here in six elections in almost 19 years. Being elected as a Dutch boy to represent them is an honour, to say the least, and with the support of my wife Pam, our children and six grandchildren, it keeps the wind in my sail to be working for the riding.

In 2013, we tried to establish “maple leaf and tulip day” through Bill C-214, so I hope this motion will receive unanimous consent so that we can recognize the important relationship between our two countries.

As many in the House already know, I have always been a strong backer of strengthening the bond between our two countries. My parents are both from the Netherlands. My dad was born in Beverwijk, a town in northern Holland, and my mom was in southern Holland in a province called Brabant. She was born in the town of Moergestel. Both were from large families. They immigrated to Cape Breton in 1952, along with hundreds of others who went to my beautiful province of Nova Scotia; my colleagues from Nova Scotia here today represent many Dutch people in their ridings.

Many came to Nova Scotia. They landed at Pier 21 and saw the beautiful farmland. It was hard the first few years because they had to work on farms and become oriented. Not all of them became farmers, but a good part of them did.

My parents started a farm of eggs and vegetables, a small family farm, in a place called Millville. There were 10 of us in the family. My mom is not around anymore, but her legacy remains on the farm and with the family. The farm has over 100,000 laying hens and over 500 acres of crops. There are many grandchildren and great-grandchildren who gather together on Christmas Eve at the folks' house.

As chair of the Canada-Netherlands Friendship Group, it was a great honour to meet the Prime Minister of the Netherlands at the Ottawa airport upon his arrival last fall. I spent time with him and Ambassador Henk van der Zwan during the visit, and it was a great honour.

It is important for us to celebrate this bond between our two countries. May 5 is significant to the Dutch community because it was on that day in 1945 that the Nazi army surrendered after a brutal winter. The Dutch people were starving, as there was no food. Canadians were giving their lives, inch by inch, street by street, in the battle for Holland. It was a very brutal winter and in the spring, on May 5, as many of my colleagues have recognized, there was a tremendous celebration. On this day, people in the Netherlands and those of Dutch heritage around the world pause to commemorate their country's liberation.

The freedom of the Netherlands was achieved by the efforts of Canadian soldiers. Many paid the ultimate sacrifice. As was mentioned, more than 7,600 Canadians died in the campaign in the Netherlands. It was a tremendous sacrifice for freedom. I had the honour of visiting many of the gravesites in the Netherlands, and one really does not grasp it until going row by row. As my colleague from Chatham-Kent—Leamington recognized, there are so many cemeteries.

● (1200)

Many of those young men from rural communities, cities, farms, fishing wharfs and factories went over there to fight. They fought for a couple of years over there. The sad part, when we visit those gravesites, is to see that they died within weeks of the war ending. The last push to free Holland was brutal. Many died in February, March and April. However, the gravesites are kept in immaculate condition, with greenery and flowers. Dutch children visit the sites and light candles for them, so they are never forgotten.

I was over there for the 70th anniversary of the liberation and it was tremendous. Over 70 years later, the Dutch people continue to honour the sacrifices of those Canadian soldiers. It was an honour to have the Dutch prime minister address the House. He was the first Dutch prime minister to address Parliament. We were also honoured to have World War II veteran Don White in the House that day.

As I said, I had the great honour of visiting the Netherlands for the 70th anniversary of the liberation and the whole country was moved, especially when the Canadian soldiers in the parade passed by. The big parade in Apeldoorn is unbelievable. When I go back to my riding and visit one of the legions, I see pictures of those who were there during the liberation.

One of the most visible symbols of the bond between our two countries is the tulip. In 1945, the Dutch royal family sent 100,000 tulip bulbs to Canada as a mark of their gratitude for Canada providing them refuge during the Nazi occupation of their country in the Second World War. Also, Canada temporarily designated a spot, I believe, at the Ottawa General Hospital, as Dutch soil, so a Dutch princess could be born there. However, the tulip tradition has continued. Each year, the Dutch royal family and government send thousands of tulip bulbs, which we see all around Ottawa, in remembrance. It has become Ottawa's celebrated tulip festival. People from all over North America and the world come here for that festival, and we enjoy it immensely.

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We also have influences, such as trade, which tie the knot of friendship between Canada and the Netherlands even tighter. The Netherlands is Canada's third-largest export market in Europe and 10th globally. It is Canada's second-largest source of foreign investment, after the United States. We are also like-minded in our social values and peacekeeping.

It is important for us to reflect on the tremendous contributions of Canada's Dutch communities to our society. For example, we can look at General Roméo Dallaire's great contribution to our society and the world. His father was Canadian and his mother was Dutch. He is recognized for his human rights advocacy and his distinguished military career. My riding had the pleasure of hosting him as a keynote speaker for Sydney's 2017 Remembrance Day ceremony. He not only spoke about the special bond between Canada and the Netherlands, but how it was more important than ever that we continued to strengthen our relationship and the accomplishments that we believed could be done internationally.

Another very successful Dutch Canadian is a lady from my riding, Annette Verschuren. She grew up on a farm just down the road from me. She became president of Home Depot for Canada and Asia, and is the chancellor of Cape Breton University.

Dutch heritage day will provide all Canadians with an opportunity to recognize the great things that we have between our countries. With the intolerance seen around the world, it is more important than ever for a bond between our countries. I noticed first-hand when our Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands were sitting together talking, as well as in their addresses to the House. They believed that we could connect and help with peace and tolerance on the world scene, and help make things better for all around the world.

I will conclude by thanking all the veterans whose courage and sacrifice contributed to the liberation of the Netherlands, and Canadians of Dutch heritage for helping to build the great country in which we live.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

FEDERAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be back in Ottawa and in this new chamber. As a Conservative, I am dispositionally inclined to prefer old things to new things. However, this is a beautiful chamber. The architects have done a phenomenal job. It will be an honour to

be here prospectively for 10 years, or shorter if my constituents feel that way, or much longer if things go the way projects in government sometimes go.

I know it has been an eventful break for some members. We had the resignation and then un-resignation of a number of Liberals. We are certainly hoping John McCallum does not un-resign as well. We also hope the Prime Minister does not see this important post as an opportunity to have a soft landing for yet another failing minister. In any event, there would be so many to choose from.

I hope the Prime Minister did not take any illegal vacations over the break. I suppose he would prefer if I called them "irregular" vacations. I hope the finance minister enjoyed his time away, as well. Perhaps he passed some truly unforgettable time at his villa in France.

I had the opportunity to meet many of my constituents over the break. Many of them are finding the government's approach hard to swallow, so I suggested they try plant-based alternatives instead.

If members did not notice, 2019 is an election year, which means I am sure we will get a lot of great non-partisan work done together. I know the ambulance chasers and un-Canadian Neanderthals on this side of the House sure appreciate the Prime Minister's commitment to positive politics.

However, none of us take the insults personally. We wish the Prime Minister very well with his upcoming transition to the private sector. I suspect that the response of voters to his policies will demonstrate exactly why the Prime Minister liked the idea of a basic dictatorship.

Before I get to the substance of my remarks, on a couple more serious notes, I had the opportunity to visit Taiwan over the break, which was a real pleasure. We have seen the increasing aggressiveness of the PRC government toward Taiwan. All members should understand the importance of standing in solidarity with our democratic partners in Taiwan.

There are many news stories that we see from time to time in Canada and around the world that jump out at us, and probably did during the break. However, I want to draw the attention of members to one in particular that jumped out at me. Prior to Coptic Christian Christmas celebrations in Egypt, a terrorist tried to plant a bomb targeting worshippers. In this case, disaster was averted because of police action. An officer, Mustafa Abid, gave his life as he sought to defuse a bomb.

Christians face challenges in Egypt and in many countries in the region. However, there are also many from the Muslim community who believe in their rights and work hard to keep them safe. I am sure all of us would join me in saluting the courage and sacrifice of people like Mustafa Abid, who set an example of sacrificial love and service to his country and to its minority communities.

I have the opportunity today to share a few brief remarks on Bill C-57 and proposed Senate amendments.

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Bill C-57 sets out a legal framework for developing and implementing a federal sustainable development strategy and it seeks to make the process of decision-making accountable to Parliament. The act requires that all government decision-making is done with the view to the impact on future generations. In principle, I think we would all agree that decisions made by government should not be made merely in terms of present considerations, but we should think about the impacts down the road, not only on ourselves but on those who come after us. It is our responsibility to try to position our country in every policy domain for success over the long term to ensure that, as much as possible, the country we pass on to our children and grandchildren is even better than the one we received from our parents and grandparents.

Bill C-57 invites us to explore the mechanism by which that happens and the reporting mechanism by which Parliament is kept up to date on the particulars of plans by government that are aimed at advancing sustainability.

This bill was passed by the House, it went to the Senate and amendments were made in the Senate. Now it is up to the House to consider the particulars of the amendments and to reply to the message from the Senate that speaks to that. The amendments consider, in particular, the strength of the mechanisms by which the government can actually enforce its commitments, allegedly what it intends to do, with respect to sustainability.

● (1210)

The Senate saw it, as part of its amendments, to ensure performance-based contracts provided by the government to contractors and employees incorporated sustainability objectives. This is a laudable goal and one that seems quite naturally associated with the objectives of the bill. That is the second of the amendments we are looking at as part of the message we are considering sending back to Senate with respect to Bill C-57.

Unfortunately, the government has rejected this proposed amendment from the Senate. In the message, it states:

...because the amendment seeks to legislate employment matters which are beyond the policy intent of the bill, whose purpose is to make decision-making related to sustainable development more transparent and accountable to Parliament.

It seems to me to be a very strange basis for rejecting the amendment, since the intent of the bill is surely to improve the quality of decision-making with respect to sustainable development. Improving transparency is part of that, but it is not the only part of it. Also, the very idea of greater accountability should involve building sustainability into the metrics used in performance-based contracts. That is the nature of the amendment from the Senate that the government still proposes to reject.

The proposed rejection of this amendment raises many questions about how serious the government is with respect to its commitment to sustainability. Given the second rejection of this second amendment, we might consider how serious the government is about pursuing sustainability in general. Indeed, if we look at the actions of the government across a wide variety of different domains, we see its lack of engagement with this area of sustainability in particular. We have a government which is not at all interested in the substantive principles of sustainability. It might like to use it and see

it as a buzzword, but it is a substantive idea in which we believe on this side of the House. I do not think the government across the way does at all.

What is sustainability all about? What is this principle that is lacking in the approach taken by the government?

Again, sustainability is about a belief that the decisions we make today should consider the impact on future generations. We should try this in every domain of policy. This word is typically invoked in the area of environmental policy and is an important concept in that context. However, across the board, the decisions made by a government should be aimed at passing a better country and world onto the next generation. We should not be short-term in our thinking and capricious about the direction we go. Rather, we should think carefully if the steps we take today will leave our country in a better position into the future.

What are the characteristics of this policy? I have talked a little already about the idea of an intergenerational lens, thinking about our own children, if we have them, or nephews and nieces, whatever the case may be and the impact this policy will have on them. It also calls for the exercise of the virtue of prudence; that is, seeing the world, the challenges we face, in the face they are. I know my friend from Spadina—Fort York, having read the book I recommended to him, *After Virtue* by Alasdair MacIntyre, will be more familiar with this concept now that the House has resumed; prudence in seeing the world as it actually is and making decisions in a judicious way, not considering simply how we might like it to be.

Some members across the way might like it if the way the world worked was that we could just run deficits in perpetuity. However, the reality of the way the world works is that we just cannot do this. As one former British prime minister said, either Thatcher or Disraeli, and my friend from Calgary Shepard will correct me, “The facts of life are conservative.”

An hon. member: Disraeli.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: It was Disraeli. Maybe Margaret Thatcher said it afterward, while quoting Disraeli. I think it was Winston Churchill who said that he thought of all these things too, but somebody else got there before him and said it first.

As well, part of sustainable policy is not painting ourselves into a corner, not making decisions that limit our options and restrict our ability to move forward in a way that we would see as constructive and making a difference in the way we would like them to.

● (1215)

If we look at the record of the government with respect to sustainability, we see it failing on every front. The Prime Minister has failed to deliver effective, sustainable policy, and unfortunately, those failures are imposing major costs on Canadians.

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Canadians realize that they are paying for the failures of the Prime Minister. He is failing to deliver sustainable policy, and the result of this failure is going to have negative impacts on the present and the future. There are going to be future tax increases. The government's failure to budget and plan for the challenges of the future will necessarily mean, as night follows day, higher taxes and higher costs in the future, especially if the government is re-elected. Canadians cannot afford the tax increases the government is planning on so many different fronts.

The government is failing us on the issue of environmental sustainability. It is failing on energy sustainability. It is failing on fiscal sustainability. It is failing to take the steps necessary to develop a sustainable economy. It is failing to put in place strong policies for the sustainability and strength of our immigration system. It is failing to develop a foreign policy that reflects the values of sustainability and strength I talked about. It is failing to treat our democratic institutions in a way that preserves them in good health for the future. It is failing to approach the treatment of social institutions in civil society in a way that effectively supports their sustainability.

I believe that this is one of the most, if not the most, capricious governments we have ever seen in the country. It is characterized by reckless experiment, by a lack of a plan and no regard for the future. Canadians are seeing the effects of that series of failures. They are seeing the ways in which the failures of the government impose real, concrete costs on them. The government's failures are costing all of us money and are leading to higher taxes.

Let us talk about some of the particular ways the government has failed to support the development of sustainable policy across a series of different domains. The first area is environmental sustainability. I spoke to this bill previously. I identified a series of environmental accomplishments by the previous Conservative government. From 2006, the previous government invested over \$17 billion to support the environment. There were many different initiatives, and I read them before, so I will not go through all of them. Suffice it to say, we know that there were various policies, such as the green infrastructure fund, the eco-energy retrofit, clean air regulations and significant work in the area of tax relief for green energy generation. There was supporting conservation, supporting national parks, expanding snowmobile and recreation trails to improve access to the environment across the country, encouraging donations of ecologically sensitive lands, supporting family-oriented conservation by providing \$3 million to allow the Earth Rangers foundation to expand its ongoing work and investing almost \$2 billion in the federal contaminated sites action plan. These are just a brief sampling of the many contributions made in the area of the environment.

However, so often when we talk about the environment, we focus on the issue of greenhouse gas emissions. I am proud to note that under the previous Conservative government, greenhouse gas emissions went down. I wish the Liberals were applauding. They are not. Maybe they wish it were not true. My friend from Spadina—Fort York clearly has not learned anything, because he has said that it was only because of the recession. The reality is that emissions went down while the economy grew in Canada. Meanwhile, compared to the rest of the world, other parts of the world were more severely hit by the recession, yet global emissions went up during the same

period. Therefore, it is hard to use the recession to explain the reduction in emissions when in fact what was happening in Canada was that emissions were going down while the economy was growing.

The member for Spadina—Fort York and other Liberals seem to think the only way we can reduce emissions is by having a recession. It follows that they, through their carbon tax, are trying to engineer a situation in which they think emissions will go down, and they are hurting the economy in the process.

• (1220)

Conservatives believe that we can actually have economic growth and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Why do we believe that? It is because we have looked at our own record in this country. We have seen how it happens.

Another thing my friend from Spadina—Fort York likes to do when we have these conversations is to say that it was only because of the wisdom and foresight of Gerald Butts and Kathleen Wynne in the Ontario provincial government, but the reality is, first of all, that those policies of the Kathleen Wynne government were not that popular, as we saw in the last provincial election. Particularly when it comes to environmental policy, we see that in Canada over the period of the previous Conservative government, emissions went down, or they went up by less, in every single jurisdiction. Meanwhile, we had economic growth. It is hard to say that it was only because of the policies of provincial governments if we saw improvement with respect to greenhouse gas emissions in every single jurisdiction. These are facts that make members of the government uncomfortable, but they are facts that are easily verifiable nonetheless.

We have seen the accomplishments of the approach we took. How did we achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions? We chose not to take the punitive approach of the Liberal government, its failed punitive approach, which is to use the environment as an excuse to impose new taxes on Canadians as a way of raising revenue for the government. That was not the road we went down. Instead, we went down a road that we thought was more effective and more sustainable, which was to provide incentives and opportunities along with the appropriate mix of regulations, which were not designed to bring about more revenue for government or engorge the size of the state. Rather, they gave people the opportunity to make environmental improvements. It was a positive, constructive approach, not a punitive approach. It was an approach genuinely focused on the environment and sustainability, not an approach like that of the government, which is to use the environment as an excuse to do what it has really wanted to do all along, which is to raise taxes.

When it comes this area, it is very clear that the Liberals intend to raise taxes further. They have been unwilling to rule out significant increases in carbon taxes after the next election. It is very telling that they do not want to talk about that now, yet they have created a big fiscal hole in the budget. They have positioned themselves for substantial increases in the carbon tax to come.

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Canadians are already paying for the failures of the government when it comes to environmental and fiscal policies, but we know that they will pay substantially more. If the Liberals are re-elected, they will significantly increase the carbon tax and other taxes to pay for their failures when it comes to our fiscal policy, but also, they will use their environmental failures as an excuse. When a carbon tax fails to reduce emissions, because we know the carbon tax will not succeed in reducing emissions, they will simply say that they will have to raise the carbon tax further, and that will be their excuse.

On this side of the House, we say no. We say look at the past. Look at other countries that have removed their carbon tax. We can achieve real, concrete progress on the environment in a way that is environmentally and economically sustainable. We can do what we have done in the past, which is reduce emissions, and we can reduce them further in a way that does not use this issue as an excuse to impose punitive taxes on Canadians who are getting by. We want Canadians to not just get by. We want Canadians to be able to get ahead, and to do that, it is important to be reducing their taxes and giving them opportunities to make environmental improvements with things like we had in the past, such as eco-energy home retrofits, not the punitive approach of the government.

We can achieve technological progress. We can do it in a sustainable way instead of in a way that cuts off growth. The Liberals will tell us that the way to improve in terms of the environment is to hold back growth. We think that growth and environmental improvements can happen at the same time.

● (1225)

Let us talk then about why the carbon tax, in particular, will not work. There are a few fairly obvious reasons for this. One of them is elasticity. The theory of the carbon tax is that if a tax is imposed on a particular thing, people who are making economic decisions at the margins will choose less of it. However, that is highly dependent on the elasticity of the particular good we are talking about, or, in other words, how responsive people are to the price of it.

Something like a vacation on a private Caribbean island might be considered a highly elastic good. People tend to be responsive to a price signal, because they can always take a different vacation. They have a choice among different options, so it is a highly elastic good. Of course, a vacation on a private island is only an elastic good if people are paying for it themselves. If people are not paying for it themselves, they are not going to be responsive to a price signal with respect to that. This is just a hypothetical example of something that we might consider to be an elastic good.

An example of an inelastic good would be home heating. People who could afford it would never say that they would not heat their homes anymore, although maybe people in very dire situations would say that, because of the cost of home heating fuel. The only people who would make that decision would be people who could not afford to heat their homes. However, people who could afford it, regardless of the cost, would see it as necessary to heat their homes in the wintertime. People do not stop eating because the price of food has gone up.

When the government imposes a tax, as the government is doing through its carbon tax, on inelastic goods, on things that are necessities of life, the effect is not a reduction in their use. The effect

is simply greater cost and greater pain for the taxpayer. The failure of the Prime Minister to see this means not a change in terms of the environment. Rather, it means the imposition of higher costs on Canadians.

What is the alternative? The alternative is trying to improve the productivity and effectiveness of the tools we are using through support for renovations, improvements in productivity, policies that encourage research and development in this area and appropriate targeted regulations.

For example, one can still drive to the grocery store but be able to do it in a more fuel-efficient way. One can have renovations to one's house so that there is less leakage. One can still heat one's home but do it in a way that is costing less and benefiting one's own pocketbook as well as the environment. We can get there, but only if people have the ability to make these renovations and if these technological improvements are happening.

The approach of the government, though, is not to facilitate the kinds of transitions that can actually bring about a change. Rather, it is to impose a punitive tax. That approach ignores the fact that without the change in technology or supports for renovations and other changes, such as the kinds of policies pursued by the former Conservative government, for many people this is simply a tax imposed on something inelastic, something they need and have to pay for regardless.

If the member for Spadina—Fort York wants to heckle, I encourage him to come a little closer so that I can hear what he is saying and respond.

Another issue with the carbon tax that we should think about is the regulatory complexity involved. The advocates of a carbon tax initially talked about it as an opportunity to reduce the regulatory burden. In fact, what we see with the government is the piling on of new regulations, in addition to the carbon tax. It is not proceeding with the tax in a way that even those who support the concept would recommend. The government is imposing a variety of other additional taxes and costs in the process.

I wanted to make another comment, when it comes to the carbon tax, about the whole area of a punitive approach. There is an interesting study that was done. It is classically called the Haifa daycare example. I have referred to it in the House before. This is an experiment that was done. Basically, a daycare centre was frustrated that parents were coming a bit late to pick up their kids.

● (1230)

The daycare decided to do what a traditional first year microeconomics student would recommend, and that was to impose a small fine or a tax on those who came late. What the daycare found was interesting, and that was that the rate of truancy increased after it imposed the fee. Why was that the case? When a punitive approach is imposed, people may sometimes be frustrated by it, but they also may not have a choice in a particular situation. People said that, if they were already late, they might as well be later. This shows the effect of failing to work collaboratively with people in response to a situation and preserve the kind of social incentives around changing behaviour. When a punitive tax is imposed, it reduces one's ability to build a co-operative consent.

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The government has really so little credibility on this issue that people are not responding well to it. That is why voters in provincial elections across this country, in New Brunswick, in Ontario and soon in Alberta, are rejecting the carbon tax and calling instead for a more genuinely sustainable, genuinely effective policy.

What is particularly galling about the government's imposition of the carbon tax and why so many everyday Canadians in my constituency are frustrated by it is that it is not applying the carbon tax in nearly the same way or to the same degree to many of Canada's largest emitters. The Liberals do not say they want to have a tax on carbon, but they have other ways of saying it that do not involve the word tax. However, Canadians know the government is imposing a tax on everything that involves the use of carbon emissions—the food we eat, driving, home heating fuel and those sorts of things.

However, at the same time the Liberals are telling Canada's largest emitters that they do not want to impose this tax on them because they realize that having the tax imposed on them will have a negative impact on their bottom line and might hurt their ability to grow and create jobs here in Canada.

If the Liberals recognize that the carbon tax will have a negative impact on their friends, the largest emitters, the people who can afford to hire lobbyists, how is that they fail to recognize the negative impact that the carbon tax has on everybody else? I am speaking of those families in my constituency and other constituencies who are just getting by, who are struggling to get ahead, who want to have more opportunities, who want to have more money at the end of the month left over for themselves and their kids.

If the Liberals understand that the carbon tax is not helping Canada's largest emitters and therefore they want to give them a break, why do they not understand the same thing about those families who are trying to get ahead? Why do they not give those families the same break that they have given to the largest emitters?

We in this caucus want to give all of those people a complete break. We want to make sure that those families who are struggling do have that greater amount that they are looking for left over at the end of the month, so that they can use it for whatever they want, whatever their dreams and aspirations are for their families—to put a little more in the kids' education fund, to be able to take that extra vacation, not necessarily to a private island but maybe just a road trip to visit some members of the family.

If Canadians did not have to pay the carbon tax, they would be so much better off and we could achieve those environmental objectives at the same time. The government perversely understands the negative impact that the carbon tax has on some people, but it is unwilling to do what is right and necessary to help those families who would like to have a bit more in their pockets at the end of the year.

I want to read a number of quotes that highlight the problems with the carbon tax.

The first is from Massimo Bergamini, president of the National Airlines Council of Canada. He said, “A carbon tax is probably the worst tool that you can envisage for aviation if you want to reduce emissions.”

●(1235)

Philip Cross, a Munk senior fellow with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, said our society's shift to new energy sources “will be enabled by radical technological innovations not government tinkering with the tax system. Thinking otherwise reflects a refusal to learn the lessons of how foundational change occurs in our society.”

This is such an important point. The change requires technological change, and it requires the capacity for businesses to innovate. However, we have a government that calls our small businesses tax cheats and imposes punitive taxes on those who are struggling to get ahead, and at the same time gives a holiday to the largest emitters. This is not what is going to bring about a truly sustainable economy.

Dennis Darby, the CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, says, “Canada already has a significant problem attracting investment from both foreign and domestic sources”. The carbon tax “weakens our investment position”.

Jeff Carr, who I am not sure is a relative of the minister of the same name, although probably not, is the environment minister in New Brunswick, and he says the Liberals are bullying New Brunswick over the carbon tax.

We see this kind of effort to impose federal policy on provinces in so many different areas. Make no mistake: the federal government is trying to raise revenue from this. It claims otherwise and yet refuses to take the GST off the carbon tax, so with any provincial carbon tax that is imposed, whether willingly or not, the federal government will be collecting more on top of that. The least the Liberals could have done, if they wanted to help families who are struggling to get ahead, was not impose the GST on top of the carbon tax. Instead, this is a tax on tax for struggling families.

We know why the government is doing this. It is because of its out-of-control deficits. We are already paying in so many different ways for the mistakes of the Prime Minister, and this will continue.

I want to read a quote from Ross McKittrick, professor of economics at the University of Guelph. “[T]he federal plan involves adding even more regulations to the mix”. I talked about this before. The promise of a carbon tax allegedly was about removing regulations at the same time. The Liberals are imposing new regulations while increasing the carbon tax, with plans after the next election, as we know, for further dramatic increases to the carbon tax to plug their deficit hole. The quote reads:

[T]he federal plan involves adding even more regulations to the mix—then sticking a carbon tax on top. This looks nothing like what economists have recommended.

In fact the economics literature provides no evidence this would be an efficient approach, and some evidence it would be worse than regulations alone.

There are many other different quotes I could read. I want to read from this article that I found, which I think is quite revealing. It is by Michael Binnion, who is the president of the Quebec Oil and Gas Association. The article is called “I believe in global warming—and even I think carbon taxes are idiotic”. “Idiotic” is a quotation. It says:

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Let me preface by saying that I believe the greenhouse effect is real. Therefore, I am for sensible policies that reduce global emissions. Sadly, carbon taxes aren't sensible if our goal is to reduce global emissions. They cost too much and do too little. So how did we go so wrong on carbon taxes?

Carbon taxation was originally based on a right-wing, free-market theory. The simple idea, to paraphrase Milton Friedman, is that if you tax something, you get less of it. It could elegantly allow the markets to find the most efficient ways to reduce carbon without the need for government regulations. Many respectable conservative-minded people bought into this theory. Let's look at the reality in practice.

Theoretically, carbon prices are supposed to reduce regulation. However, in every jurisdiction where carbon pricing has been implemented, it doesn't reduce regulation—it increases it. Carbon-pricing schemes in Europe, California and Canada are all very complicated. The Canadian government just recently introduced 500 new pages of legislation and regulation. Another example, the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan, has a carbon-tax-credit program, but acknowledges the cost of regulatory compliance is likely too high for all but the largest companies.

Let me say parenthetically that this is an area in which we see the failures of this government, which should be sensitive to the needs of small business.

● (1240)

With respect to the Alberta plan imposed by the NDP government there as well, when we talk about a credit program, we see that if the costs of compliance are too high for all but the biggest companies, then we are negatively impacting small business and creating a particular disadvantage and burden for those small businesses. It is not surprising, when we have a government that has called small business owners tax cheats, that when it tried to increase taxes on small business, until it was caught, it had to pull back to some extent from that, although we still saw many policies that had a negative impact on small business through that whole situation.

The article continues:

Another problem is carbon leakage, which occurs when production and investment simply move to jurisdictions without a carbon tax. In this case, emissions are simply displaced in whole or in part.

Carbon leakage is worse than you think, as it can actually increase global emissions. Take the case of Canadian aluminum, which produces only two tonnes of carbon per tonne, versus American aluminum at 11 tonnes of carbon per tonne. In practice, no one should have to explain to an aluminum worker that they lost their job because “after all, we all need to do our part,” only to have global emissions increase 550 per cent as a result. (To generalize this example, Canada's economy is 70 per cent reliant on trade, and 80 per cent of our trade is with the United States, which has not imposed a carbon tax.)

To try and mitigate carbon leakage, every carbon-pricing scheme uses output-based allocations (OBAs). Industries that are energy intensive and trade exposed (EITE) are given free permits to emit or a carbon-tax rebate to allow them to compete. For example, we would give the aluminum industry a tax exemption for carbon taxes based on its output.

However, as carbon-tax enthusiasts like to point out, people like to avoid taxes, so everyone will lobby for a tax rebate based on complicated formulas and models. Since government determines who will receive these massive subsidies, and how much they will receive, the process is inevitably politicized.

Here is one more point in the article: “The other problem we find in practice: Demand for hydrocarbons is very inelastic.” I did not just make that up.

It continues:

People will pay what it takes to heat their homes and get to work. The Conference Board of Canada found that even a \$200/tonne carbon tax would only reduce 12 megatonnes of Canadian emissions before carbon leakage. Global carbon would likely only be reduced by 70 per cent of this amount. Meanwhile, just one large LNG plant could achieve more than that by replacing coal in China with natural gas.

Canada has a global comparative advantage in carbon in many industries because of our high environmental standards. A global approach to capitalizing on Canada's environmental advantage would yield a double dividend of a stronger economy and a

cleaner global environment. Carbon pricing, on the other hand, may create a green paradox—policies meant to reduce emissions that not only eliminate some people's jobs, but [actually] increase global emissions.

The article concludes:

So why do our left-wing friends love carbon taxes, when they say reducing emissions is their concern? The answer is the epitome of Reagan's description of government, all wrapped up in one simple, marketable policy: “If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And, if it stops moving, subsidize it.”

I think the article lays out the arguments very well that, because of the inelasticity of many of the goods that would be implicated in a carbon tax, we can see the government is still not going to get there. However, it is setting the stage for being able to significantly increase the carbon tax. Canadians do not want to see that happen. They do not want the government to impose a carbon tax at all. They do not want to see the big increases in the carbon tax that the government is planning. It is not economically sustainable. It does not move us toward environmental sustainability.

The article talks about new production in areas like LNG displacing the less clean energy production happening in other countries. This would present a great opportunity for reducing global emissions. If we can expand our energy sector in Canada in a way that is clean and involves respecting the human rights of workers—something that happens here in Canada and does not happen in other oil-producing jurisdictions around the world—then we will have done a great deal for reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.

● (1245)

That is what a sustainable environmental policy would look like. Let us think about building things that are sustainable, about building and growing for sustainability, not cutting our economy off at the knees, not taking a punitive approach and not imposing new taxes on those who cannot afford it while giving breaks to those who have high-priced lobbyists and connections, those who, like the Prime Minister, do not have to worry about money too much.

There is more we can do when it comes to improving our environment. Our leader just made an announcement about how a Conservative government under his leadership would work to end the practice of raw sewage being dumped into Canadian waterways. That seems, intuitively, like a pretty obvious thing we should be working toward. I know it is deeply frustrating to people in my province who believe in the environment and sustainability to see the government allow its friends at the local level to dump raw sewage, with all its associated negative impacts on the environment.

Government Orders

It was quite striking how the environment minister allowed former Liberal MP, former mayor of Montreal, Denis Coderre, while he was the mayor, to dump raw sewage into the St. Lawrence Seaway. At the same time the mayor was saying all kinds of terrible things about Alberta's energy sector. He was concerned that if there was a pipeline it might involve some accidental leakage of products of our energy resources. Meanwhile, he was petitioning the government to allow him to intentionally dump raw sewage. We are not talking about an accidental leak. We are talking about the intentional pouring of raw sewage from Montreal into the St. Lawrence Seaway.

That is something a Conservative government, led by our leader, would confront. That is real environmental policy. That is an effective way of moving us toward sustainability. It is so galling when people see the hypocrisy that somehow a single mom driving her kids to soccer or buying groceries has to pay more because it is apparently her part for the environment, whereas Liberal politicians dumping raw sewage into our waterways is totally fine.

Canadians object to that hypocrisy. We need a proper understanding of sustainability, of sustainable policy, and that is what we will deliver, not an excuse for raising taxes. We see how the government is failing when it comes to developing environmentally sustainable policies. It is using this area as an excuse to simply raise taxes.

Having spoken about environmental sustainability, I would like to talk a bit about building a sustainable energy system for our country.

As the member of Parliament for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan in Alberta but also as a grandson of an engineer who worked for Syncrude in the oil and gas sector, I am very proud of Alberta's and Canada's energy sector. There are some politicians who seem embarrassed about it. They should not be. They should be proud of the technological, environmental and human accomplishments of that sector. I am proud of the legacy of my grandfather, of my province and of the country.

This is not just something that matters for Albertans. Our energy sector matters for all Canadians. All Canadians benefit from it. Albertans are happy to pay their fair share of taxes and see that money go toward helping encourage economic development and opportunity across the country.

● (1250)

Many Canadians who may not even know it benefit from the energy sector. People are working building pallets in Ontario, pallets that are then used to move material in our energy sector. Then there are the many people who commute. Think about the young man from Montreal who earned enough money to start a business back home, who worked in Alberta, came home and used the money to start a business employing people in Montreal. Think about the young woman from the Maritimes who was the first in her family to get an education, who had the financial security to do so because she was able to spend a few years working in the oil and gas sector. These are people from across the country who benefited from our energy sector, who were then able to build on that to create more jobs and opportunities in their regions of the country.

This is exactly what Canadians could and should be proud of, yet we have a Prime Minister who talks negatively about the impact of

male construction workers who are working hard to provide for their families. Canadians found the Prime Minister's comments about male construction workers offensive. After all, these are not guys who get to sit in a heated building all day, getting paid to give their opinions. These are people who work outside in the cold, day in and day out, who are building this country. They are men and women, but in the particular example the Prime Minister used he was talking derisively about male construction workers.

The contributions to our economy and our communities that are made by working men and women should not be dismissed by a Prime Minister who had the benefit of a trust fund. These are people whose economic reality is totally different from his. The Prime Minister does not worry about their economic well-being because he never had to worry about his own, but these are people who understand what it means to pay the price for their government's failure. When new and higher taxes are imposed on them, they understand.

People in Alberta are seeing the impact of bad policies at the provincial and federal levels, but especially at the federal level, that impose new taxes on them and seek to hold them back. At every turn, the government seems embarrassed about our national success when it comes to our energy sector.

We need a Prime Minister who is not embarrassed about our energy sector. We need a Prime Minister who believes in promoting the energy sector, recognizing and promoting its successes, and who understands that a strong and sustainable energy sector is good for Canada, good for every region of Canada, good for the economy and good for the environment. The technology we develop in the oil sands can be employed around the world and the greatest possible engine for a reduction in emissions is the technological change that comes through the innovation that is happening and will continue to happen.

Unfortunately, we have a government that in many respects has a colonial mentality toward Alberta. Liberals do not take the concerns of Alberta seriously and feel they can simply govern Alberta without considering the priorities and needs of the people in my province. Our province deserves recognition and respect. Unfortunately, we have seen so little from members of the government caucus who come from Alberta. Bizarrely, we see them voting with the government against pipeline projects.

There was an opposition day supporting a major pipeline project and every single member of the government caucus, including members from Alberta, voted against that. These are people who told their constituents that they would come to Ottawa and stand up for Alberta, but they have done the exact opposite. Instead, they happily parrot the government lines with respect to our energy sector and they do not stand up for their province.

Again, it is not just Alberta that benefits from a strong energy sector. There are opportunities that spread to all regions of this country that come from having a strong energy sector. There is the benefit of people working in Alberta and bringing resources, know-how and experience back home. There are the people who work in manufacturing and value-added processes and who produce components for the energy sector or work in the area of value-added that happens afterwards.

Government Orders

● (1255)

It is interesting how the government talks about my province. It says it can give a little money here and a little money there, and very often its efforts of so-called financial support are paltry in terms of the sums. I think it was maybe budget 2017 that gave \$30 million to Alberta, which is about as much as the executives at Bombardier were paid in bonuses at the same time they received a massive subsidy from the Liberal government. The sums are a pretty clear demonstration of the lack of priority that the energy sector receives from the government.

The other issue is that Albertans and people in the energy sector across the country are not looking for a little extra cash. They are looking for the opportunity to work in the energy sector. They are looking for the kinds of policies that allow the private sector-driven energy development that we have benefited from for so long to continue.

A lot of the discussion of how we build and strengthen our energy sector has recently come around the issue of pipelines. Let us review the record, often misstated in the House, when it comes to pipelines. Under the previous Conservative government, four pipelines were approved and built, and a fifth was approved with conditions but not yet built. The four pipelines built were Enbridge's Alberta Clipper, Kinder Morgan's Anchor Loop, Enbridge's Line 9 reversal and TransCanada's Keystone pipeline, which is different from Keystone XL. Northern gateway was approved, and Keystone XL was pushed hard but rejected by the American administration throughout that period.

Significant achievements were made by the Conservatives when it comes to pipelines, yet the Liberal government, bizarrely, tries to talk out of both sides of its mouth on this pipeline issue. It will sometimes oppose pipelines in its communications and other times it will suggest that the Conservatives did not build enough pipelines. Let us be clear, though, that the Conservatives approved pipeline projects that were proposed. Our friends across the way would like us to stop pipeline projects that are proposed while approving pipeline projects that have not been proposed, which I think quite clearly shows a lack of understanding of the process.

What did Liberals do on pipelines? Right out of the gate, they made sure northern gateway could not proceed. They killed northern gateway and then brought forward legislation, Bill C-48, that created a tanker exclusion zone, effectively saying that Canada's energy resources could not be exported from the Alaskan border in the north to the northern tip of Vancouver Island. The effect of this exclusion zone would be, as long as it stays in place, to prevent any kind of pipeline project, regardless of who proposes it. New ideas have come forward since for new pipeline projects. For instance, indigenous communities have been actively engaged in saying they want a pipeline and want to be involved in building a pipeline, yet this is something, because of Bill C-48, that until we see a new government could not proceed.

In one letter that I read in the previous sitting of Parliament, these policies were called eco-colonialist by members of a Canadian first nation community. The government is using the environment as an excuse to impose on them policies that they do not want, to prevent

them from developing their energy resources and benefiting from the prosperity associated with it.

The Liberal government used Bill C-48 and other tools to shut off the northern gateway pipeline and then imposed many new conditions to try to prevent the progress of any east-west pipeline in this country. However, after all of this, it actually wanted to look like it was playing the other side too.

The government is so disingenuous on pipelines. It is always trying to pretend to be on both sides of the question at the same time. At least with the NDP, people know what they are getting on pipelines. With the Green Party, people know what they are getting on pipelines. With the Liberals, by now, people also know what they are getting on pipelines. However, the government is not prepared to acknowledge that.

● (1300)

The government said that in the case of the Trans Mountain pipeline, it was not going to take the steps to allow the pipeline to proceed, but it was going to buy it. It was going to buy it without building it. People in my constituency would rather that we built it without buying it. That would have been better for the economy and less expensive for the taxpayer.

This is another example of the Prime Minister's failures. There is \$4.5 billion going to a Texas-based company, which will use that money to invest in energy infrastructure in other places, not here in Canada, and to create jobs in other places, not here in Canada. Meanwhile, that company is enjoying the benefit of Canadian taxpayer dollars, and our government owns a pipeline that it does not have a plan to build.

Canadians are paying for the Prime Minister's failures. That \$4.5 billion was not his money. I know he has a large trust fund, but the pipeline did not come from the trust fund. The purchase of that pipeline came from the increasing taxes that are being paid by Canadians at home who are struggling to get ahead.

The failures of the Prime Minister and the cost those failures impose on Canadians make it harder for people at home who are struggling to get ahead. This failure, in terms of the pipeline purchase with no plan to actually get it built, is yet another example of the clear, ongoing, significant failures of the government when it comes to developing sustainable energy policy.

What would a sustainable energy policy look like for this country? I would say it would look like strong transportation networks that allow us to get our resources to market and allow us to get our resources to market in the most environmentally friendly way. Pipeline transportation, of the available methods for transportation, imposes the lowest greenhouse gas emissions in the process. Why would those who claim to be concerned about emissions not actually support the development of pipelines?

There is also an opportunity in terms of the sustainability of global security when it comes to our energy resource. It was interesting to read the CBC talking about the prospective ambassador to Canada from Japan, noting how there is a real opportunity for Canada to focus more on its relationship with Japan. Hopefully we do not send John McCallum there as an ambassador, but there is an opportunity to deepen our relationship with Japan.

Government Orders

Japan is a country that imports the vast majority of its energy resources, and most of that is coming from the Middle East through the South China Sea. The opportunity is there for an alternative, a greater export of Canadian energy resources to Japan. I think I mentioned that I spent some time over the break in Taiwan; there is a similar opportunity for partnership in Taiwan.

If Canada can be an agent for helping to facilitate greater energy security for our like-minded democratic partners in the Indo-Pacific region, it is a great opportunity for us economically and it is a great opportunity environmentally, given how clean our energy production is, but it is also an opportunity from a global security perspective, so that these countries, these partners of ours, are not potentially vulnerable to intervention in their energy supply, which is something they obviously have to consider when it comes to their security.

One of the things that particularly frustrates my constituents when it comes to our energy resources is this area of foreign interference. The debate around how Canada develops its energy resources, how we transport our energy resources, how we use them and how we preserve the natural environment that we have been given are decisions that should be made by Canadians for Canadians, and we have every ability to make those evaluations in a responsible way. However, we continually see efforts by interest groups and entities outside of Canada to interfere with the development of our energy resources and to inappropriately influence the direction of our debates.

• (1305)

By the way, recognizing the problem of foreign interference in our democratic process is seen other areas. It is something that, strikingly enough, the foreign affairs minister has talked about in the past in recognizing the problem of foreign interference.

We have called for strong legislative action around things like foreign interference in elections, for example, but the government in its election bill, Bill C-76, failed to put in place any effective mechanisms to prevent foreign interference in our elections. While facially trying to block that from happening, the bill would actually allow a Canadian entity to receive money from abroad and then, as long as it receives some money from Canada, to mix that money together and use all of it in the context of a Canadian election.

If there is a hypothetical association in Canada that receives \$10 million from an energy competitor and a Canadian donates \$5 and that association then uses that \$10 million plus \$5 to be involved in the Canadian election, that is totally legal under Bill C-76 as long as the money came from abroad before the election period.

It is not hard to see what is going on here. It is not hard to see that the system that was put in place by Bill C-76 allows foreign money to come into this country and oppose the development of our energy resources, against the interests and wishes of most Canadians.

The Liberal government's failure in Bill C-76 to actually address the issue of foreign interference has significant negative impact on our economy. It tilts the discussion in our election debate when millions of dollars coming in from abroad are negatively impacting the discussion. Again, these are decisions that should be made by Canadians for Canadians. We have all of the tools here in Canada to make these decisions.

Another issue to consider in terms of foreign interference is the way in which consultations proceed for the development of our natural resource projects. Consultation is important in the development of any natural resource project. That consultation should hear from those who would be affected by the project, and we should certainly also hear from those who have expertise on the project. The approach that the government is taking with respect to consultation would effectively allow anyone and everyone—foreign interests without any direct expertise—to be able to slow down the process.

Let us have these debates here in Canada and let us make sure that we do not have this foreign interference any longer. It is deeply frustrating to my constituents and to many Canadians that our energy debates can be manipulated by foreign interests whose own economic interests are very different from ours, and yet the government is not doing anything to address that very serious problem.

What does it take to build a strong, sustainable energy sector, an energy sector that allows us to pass a strong environment and economy on to the next generation? We need to be proud of our energy sector. We need to build on those successes. We need to facilitate development of the energy sector while taking further steps by creating the right incentives for further improvement.

That does not mean imposing a punitive tax. That does not mean criticizing the energy sector. That does not mean being embarrassed by it. It means standing up for the jobs and the opportunities that are associated with that sector. I am proud to be part of a party that does that, a party that believes that Canadians want to get ahead. That means having opportunities in a variety of different sectors, and one of the key sectors is certainly the energy sector.

The clearest way in which we see the failures of the Liberal government when it comes to sustainable policies is in its failures around fiscal sustainability. This is a very clear-cut issue. We need to have a budget, a budget plan, that is sustainable in the long term, which means recognizing that whatever we spend today, we will have to pay for either today or tomorrow, and if we do not have to pay for it, then our children will have to pay for it.

• (1310)

Fiscal sustainability means recognizing that reality. It means balancing the budget or having a long-term plan that may involve deficits in some years, surpluses in others, but in aggregate is balanced over the medium and long term. Yes, it involves the occasional deficit in cases of severe global recession, perhaps armed conflict or natural disasters, but it does not, as a matter of course, mean just running deficits all the time. That is clearly unsustainable public policy. However, the Liberals do not understand this. They are imposing significant costs on Canadians through their out-of-control deficits, and make no mistake, we will have to pay for these deficits. If we do not pay for them now, we will have to pay for them later.

If the Liberals receive another mandate, we know they will increase taxes. They will increase the carbon tax. They will increase other taxes. They will increase taxes because they have to, as they have no fiscal plan and no capacity—no interest, even—in balancing the budget.

Government Orders

We have to balance the budget. We have to ensure that we have a fiscal sustainability plan.

I will make a few points clear about the government with respect to fiscal sustainability.

First, the Liberals promised during the last election that they would balance the budget this year. We are in the final year of their four-year mandate. They very clearly promised that they would balance the budget. They have no excuse for making one promise before the election and doing the opposite afterward. All the figures were public, all the information was there, and there has not been the sort of global recession that we have seen in the past. In the absence of dramatic, unforeseeable changes in the economy, and recognizing that all of the figures and information were public, they should have known and been able to act according to the plan they made. If they did not think it was good policy or that it was realistic to balance the budget in four years—even though it was already balanced at the time they took office—then they could have said so. However, they promised no more than \$10-billion deficits for the first three years and a balanced budget in the fourth year. They failed to deliver on that, and now Canadians realize that since higher deficits lead to higher taxes, people who are struggling to get ahead will have to pay for the failures of the Prime Minister when it comes to delivering on the promises he made in the last election. That was a promise made by the government that it failed to deliver on.

When we do not balance budgets, it means that money that could have been going to social programs to help the vulnerable, to fighting poverty, to increasing opportunity, to cutting taxes for Canadians. Instead, that money has to be used to pay interest on debt that was accumulated previously.

The government talks about investing in Canadians and programs, but we could invest a lot more if we do not have to pay interest on debt. If we did not have the debt in this country, which was begun in a significant way during peacetime under the Prime Minister's father and which has accumulated and grown dramatically under the current government, then we could invest much more in a balanced budget framework. We could invest much more in my preferred tool, tax reduction, and give Canadians more of their money back so that they would have more left over at the end of the month. However, when we run deficits in perpetuity, when we run up massive debt and have to pay interest on it, it means that in the long term we can invest less and cut taxes less. In fact, as we have seen from the government, it means steady tax increases. When we do not have a fiscally sustainable plan and we know that voters do not want taxes increased, what we see from the government is its attempt to stealthily add tax increases everywhere by removing any kind of reasonable deductions and by adding taxes on the things that previously were not taxed.

• (1315)

The government had been exploring imposing taxes on the kinds of benefits employees receive. For example, if someone worked at a restaurant and received a lunch, he or she would have to pay tax on it. If some one was one of the Prime Minister's favourite male construction workers and received some kind of benefit as part of his time on the job, perhaps a meal, he would have to pay tax on it.

Maybe those who had parking and had to commute long distances for work would suddenly have to pay tax on the parking spot.

We were able to push-back against the government. However, it is telling that in this area and in so many others it is trying to impose new taxes on Canadians. That is the product of not having fiscal sustainability. When the government has no plan to balance the budget, it desperately tries to increase taxes in ways it hopes people will not notice. Thankfully, we were able to call it out on that.

I asked an Order Paper question around that time about whether the Prime Minister's free nanny services he received from the taxpayers was considered a taxable benefit. Most Canadians do not receive two free nannies from their employer as a benefit of their work. I have never heard of that happening before. The Prime Minister thinks choice in child care means getting to choose which of the two nannies.

The Liberals, though, are always trying to impose new taxes on Canadians, people who are struggling to get ahead, even while not wanting those same taxes to apply to them. We can look at the approach they took to calling small businesses tax cheats and trying to increase taxes on small businesses. We saw that they were protecting their own fortunes through that process. They were not imposing new taxes on inherited trust funds, for example, but were imposing them on small businesses.

As an opposition over the last three years, we have been able to catch the government in the act on a few of these attempts to raise taxes. We have been able to work together with civil society organizations and the public to ensure the public is aware, working to put that pressure on the government. However, the public has not failed to notice how in every case, because of the lack of fiscal sustainability, because the government has no plan to balance the budget, the consequence of that is to try to impose new taxes at every turn. It is particularly instructive what the Liberals did with the small business tax rate.

The Conservatives were reducing the small business tax rate. We had a reduction to 9% booked in. Actually, in the last election, all three of the major parties, Conservatives, Liberal and NDP, agreed. In their platforms, they said that they would go to that 9% small business tax rate. The government reversed course. When it took power, it said that it would not reduce the small business tax rate, given that those plans had been booked in, effectively increasing the tax rate on small businesses.

Then the Liberals called small businesses tax cheats, attacked them and tried to propose all kinds of new ways to attack them. In response to the overwhelming response from small businesses, these great job creators, entrepreneurs who are driving the economic success of the country, in response to the objections from this community, they said that they would bring back the 9% plan. It is interesting that the government is as indecisive about the small business tax rate as some of its members are about their resignation dates.

Government Orders

This should not hide the general failures of the government when it comes to small business. At every turn, whether on individuals, families, people who use public transit, take their kids to sports or buy groceries, the government is increasing taxes in every way it can, at every opportunity it can, through all the means it can, and will stop at nothing because it has a massive hole in the side of its fiscal plan. We need to give Canadians an alternative to that, one which is actually fiscally sustainable. If we do not get the budget under control, this splurge of tax increases will continue. Canadians are paying for the failure of the government when it comes to the basic fiscal health of the country. Canadians know that higher deficits always mean higher taxes in the long run.

• (1320)

I have one more thing about balancing the budget. The government likes to invoke, directly or indirectly, the economic philosophy of John Maynard Keynes, who talked about stimulative spending in periods of economic challenge. Certainly, there is logic behind the idea of putting money aside during the good years and then stimulating the economy by spending more during challenging times. It ensures that the down periods in the economy are not associated with further cuts to the government. If we are in a healthy fiscal position, then we can have that kind of balance. If we are thinking ahead during the good years, then we are going to have more resources during the challenging years.

However, Canadians and others who advocated that philosophy never said that we could run deficits all the time. No economist thinks that constant never-ending deficits is the way to go. Eventually when we hit hard times, in that scenario, we may be at a point where we just cannot stimulate the economy and in fact we are forced to cut because there is just nowhere else to go.

We cannot run deficits forever. We cannot always spend more than we have. Eventually, we have to pay it back. The longer we leave it, the less we plan, the more we have to pay back in cost and interest at that point. What the government is advancing is not any kind of recognizable doctrine of economic stimulus. It is simply fiscal incontinence and there is a need for actual fiscal control when it comes to this situation. We know what the consequence of this will be. A lack of fiscal control means higher taxes tomorrow. It means Canadians paying for what the government has done.

Often when we have these discussions about debt and deficits, the government will talk about the debt-to-GDP ratio, saying that it is lower than other countries and so we are fine. However, what the government misses in those calculations is looking at the total debt-to-GDP ratio. It generally only looks at the federal debt-to-GDP ratio. Canada, as members know, is a country where many services are delivered at the subnational level. That is different from some other countries where a greater proportion of public services are delivered at the national level.

It is not at all an apples-to-apples comparison when comparing the federal debt-to-GDP ratio in Canada with the federal debt-to-GDP ratio in other jurisdictions. It makes more sense to compare our total government debt-to-GDP ratio to the total government debt-to-GDP ratio in other countries. If we make that comparison, we can see that Canadian debt is a real problem, that we have a total government debt-to-GDP ratio that is higher. It is at a level that is quite

concerning. We are in a situation where what goes up must come down. What we pay in must be paid off at some point.

The Prime Minister and the finance minister are not at all what worried about this. They say that it is totally fine. Why is that? The Prime Minister has never had to worry about money himself, so he is not worried about ours. We see that. The Prime Minister is not thinking in a pragmatic, practical way about balancing the budget because that has never been part of his reality.

The people who I talk to in my constituency understand why the government has to balance the budget. Why? Because they have to balance theirs. Sure, they understand that during hard times maybe we will have to run a deficit and pay it off during good times. We save so we are prepared for a rainy day. There is some ebb and flow. This means that during a global financial crisis maybe we run a deficit, but we get back to a balanced budget and we pay off debt. People understand that. They also understand that we cannot just keep running up the credit card bill. We cannot just keep getting more and more credit cards and all will be fine in the end. That is not how it works. Canadians understand because they are already paying for the failures of the government. They understand that we cannot run up the credit card bill in perpetuity.

• (1325)

The Prime Minister does not understand that though. That has never been part of his reality. Therefore, when it comes to his approach to governing the country, there is no limit to what he is prepared to spend, especially on himself, on breaks for insiders and those who are well connected. He does not understand the need for balance. He does not understand the experience, which is real to most of my constituents and to everyday Canadians, which is needing to pay for the things they want and realizing they just cannot spend more than they have.

To summarize this point, we have a government that is pursuing a policy of unsustainable spending, and that will have consequences. The failure of the government to have a sustainable balance sheet will mean more costs and more taxes. It will mean the Prime Minister, if he is re-elected, will try and make life more difficult by imposing those taxes on Canadians, by increasing the carbon tax and other taxes. He will do it in the future because he has done it in the past. Perhaps he will say not to worry, that he will not increase taxes. In the last election, we heard there would be a balanced budget and that did not happen. He refuses even now to rule out significant increases to the carbon tax. This is the consequence of an unsustainable fiscal policy.

On a more broad level, we have seen a failure by the government to pursue an economic policy, a policy for productivity and growth that is sustainable. What are the characteristics of a sustainable economic policy? There are many, but what we would look for is a positive investment climate. We would look for a situation where companies from around the world say that Canada is a place they want to invest. We had that previously. Under the previous Conservative government, Canada had the best economic growth, the lowest business tax rate and the lowest unemployment in the G7. Despite the global financial crisis we saw the success of those policies, making Canada a positive investment climate.

Government Orders

This is not just some abstraction. This has real consequences for those Canadians who are trying to get ahead. When we have a positive investment climate in Canada, it means Canadians can be employed, because companies are bringing money here from abroad, starting businesses and offering jobs to Canadians. People who were previously unemployed are able to work and people who are working are able to get higher paying employment. They are able to have a little more money left at the end of the month. Therefore, a positive investment climate has concrete consequences.

On this side of the House, we want Canadians to get ahead. On the other side of the House, we see policies that are making Canadians pay more and more. A positive investment climate is important for a strong and sustainable economy.

Growing productivity, the growing capacity of workers, through technological improvements and investments, to be able to produce more in the time they spend at work is key for a strong economy. Economic sustainability also invites us to consider how well everyone is doing, not just a few but everyone. That is why we should look at tax reductions, especially targeted tax relief to those who need it the most.

Under the Prime Minister, Canadians are paying more. Canadians in the middle and at the bottom are paying more. They are paying more because of the carbon tax, because of things like the elimination of the transit tax credit and the tax credit on kids' sports. The increases in taxes we are seeing from the government are forcing Canadians to pay more, especially because we see the government willing to give breaks to large emitters, breaks to their friends at the top and subsidies through things like superclusters to those who are well connected. That exacerbates inequality.

Our approach is targeted tax relief to those who need it the most. We lowered the GST, a tax that all Canadians pay. We lowered the lowest marginal tax rate. We raised the base personal exemption. We targeted income and consumption tax reductions to those who needed it the most. We worked hard to ensure that those who were working to get ahead had a little more in their pockets. Under the Liberal government, that cannot happen because those same people have to pay more as a result of the failures of the government.

We need to take steps around economic equality, growing productivity and creating a positive investment climate to build a strong and sustainable economy. A big part of that means rewards for risk-taking. It means facilitating strong small businesses.

● (1330)

When it comes to supporting businesses, the government's approach is to give corporate welfare to well-connected insiders and friends of the government. Our approach was to try to create an environment where anyone, regardless of his or her connections, could start and grow a business, recognizing the power of small business as the engine of growth in this country.

Last summer, we had a very unfortunate situation. I think the tone and the policy from the current government put a real chill on those looking to start investing in this country. During the most focused attack on small business by the government, I talked to business owners in my riding. They were so frustrated. These are people who had given their lives to working in the small business sector. They

said they were not encouraging their kids to go down the same road, or they were having a hard time encouraging their kids to go down the same road. They said that, although they love what they are doing, the piling on of new taxes, regulations and all the different tips and tricks by the government is making it harder for them to build and create jobs. The consequence is that they are not sure if they would recommend it to one of their children or to somebody else if asked. That is the effect of the approach of the current government.

When small businesses are not as able to make investments and grow the economy, when they are called tax cheats by the current government, then they choose not to make those investments or perhaps choose to make them elsewhere. That hurts the productivity of our economy. That reduces the jobs and the opportunities that are available. When we are looking for the tools that allow Canadians who are struggling to be able to get ahead, that requires more entrepreneurs creating jobs, more opportunities for employment and more competition among employers for workers.

When the Alberta economy was booming, there was real competition among employers, who were paying workers more and more as a result of how energetic the economy was. That obviously created some challenges for employers, but it created a lot of opportunities for people across the country who wanted to come and work in Alberta. However, when the government is continually making life more difficult for small business, it hurts its ability to get ahead and hurts the ability of its workers to get ahead.

We recognize that the government itself does not create jobs but creates the climate in which job creation could happen or in which job creation cannot happen. Right now, we have a government that, through its failure, is creating a climate in which it is that much harder for small business. That has real consequences for Canadians in terms of what they have to pay.

The government's approach is to support business through corporate welfare. It has superclusters, special deals and government subsidies. It even gave government money to a company that said it did not really need it but it would be a great boost of confidence and it would love to have it. I am sure a lot of Canadians at home were thinking they would love to have a bit of extra money also. It is money that could have gone to tax reductions for Canadians, not just to boost the pockets of some of these well-connected companies. The top job creators in this country, the largest companies, are not big recipients of corporate welfare, for the most part. However, the current government does not understand that.

I say this. Instead of giving corporate welfare cheques to companies taking jobs and opportunity out of Canada, let us build an investment climate where people want to invest in Canada. We have seen this as well under the current government. We have seen the current government give big corporate welfare cheques to companies. Then we see those companies moving jobs outside of the country. Therefore, instead of giving money to companies that are moving jobs out of the country, let us create a climate in which taxes are low, regulation is streamlined and companies want to make investments in Canada. That has positive consequences for Canadians getting ahead, unlike the failures of the current government, which are imposing greater costs on those Canadians who are trying to get ahead.

Government Orders

• (1335)

On this side of the House, we believe that a sustainable economy is one with strong fundamentals. That, of course, requires the fiscal health of our economy to be strong. Investors can also look at the high deficits being run by the government, and they can see that the government intends to increase their taxes. Any potential international investor knows what all of us should know—even those who do not want to admit it—which is that higher deficits lead to higher taxes.

Investors can see that if they invest in Canada today and the government does not have a plan to balance the budget, inevitably they and all of us will have to bear the impact of eventual tax increases. Our economy simply cannot afford the Prime Minister for much longer. Our economy cannot afford to pay for the mistakes being made by the Prime Minister.

Having spoken about the sustainability of our economy, our fiscal situation, our energy sector and our environment, I would like to discuss the criteria for building a sustainable immigration system, a system that has the confidence of Canadians, that can build, grow and work for a long time into the future.

Historically, we have had a very successful immigration system here in Canada. We have had a system that was orderly, was compassionate and emphasized legal immigration. I am very proud to be part of a party that, while in government, had the highest sustained immigration levels in Canada's history up to that point. I am also proud to be part of a family that has benefited from Canada's immigration system. My wife's parents came to Canada from Pakistan. My grandmother was a Holocaust survivor, a refugee who ended up in Canada by way of South America.

Many of us, in our families, have benefited from the opportunities that come from Canada's immigration system, whether that be the humanitarian aspect, refugees, or the economic opportunities that are available to those who simply came here seeking a better life economically.

We benefit from a pro-immigration consensus in this country, and Canadians want us to get it right. They want us to get the details right, so that the immigration system works, is sustainable, everybody can benefit, and so that it works for those who are coming and for those who are already here.

We see how Liberals are, frankly, desperate to divide people on this issue, but the fact is that honest debate and discussion about how we get it right, how we ensure our immigration system is sustainable, by being orderly, compassionate and legal, is particularly important.

The government has not appropriately recognized the need to deal with the growing problem under its watch of illegal immigration, of people not going through the channels that are in place for application but are instead coming across the border from the United States, claiming asylum, even though the United States is well established and recognized by the UN to already be a safe country.

How did this happen? It happened, initially, in large part, because the Prime Minister put out a tweet that created misinformation around our immigration system. It implied that anyone and everyone

could just show up here, and everything would be fine. Instead, the Prime Minister should be communicating in a clear tone about the importance of going through proper channels.

What we want is a sustainable immigration system that can work and that will work over the long term. A sustainable immigration system is one in which the channels that exist are working and functioning well, and in which people are using those channels. However, people lose confidence in our immigration system when they see people being able to come into the country and not follow the process.

How frustrating it must be for those many Canadians who are hoping to bring a family member from abroad, and that person does not happen to be in the United States and so cannot just walk across the border. People cannot just walk across the border if they are in India or China or the Philippines or anywhere else besides the United States.

• (1340)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I know and I can appreciate that the member, on many occasions in standing committees, would attempt to get into filibusters and at times would become somewhat irrelevant.

I have been very patient in listening to the member talk about a wide variety of issues, virtually anything but Bill C-57, on a number of occasions. Trust me, I have been patient in the last hour and a half. When the Government of Canada gave tax breaks, that party voted against them, and yet the member spends 15 minutes on—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am afraid we are getting into debate. The hon. member does have an unlimited amount of time, and he has covered a number of issues. It sounds fairly interesting, and I am sure he will bring it back to Bill C-57 as he is going around.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my friend from Winnipeg North, I am not sure if he has read Bill C-57 or is familiar with the details in it, but Bill C-57 deals with the framework for sustainability. The member heckled to say that it does not mention immigration, but it deals with an evaluation of sustainability across government. It deals with considerations of the sustainability of policy in all areas.

We are debating a message to the Senate. The government's message to the Senate is not to concur in one of the Senate amendments, which would effectively deal with the issue of building into performance contracts considerations about the sustainability goals of government.

Government Orders

I will not refer to whether the member was here in the beginning, because it would be unparliamentary to do so, but if he had been here he would know that I talked about how that section really raises big questions about the government's commitment to sustainability across the board. I talked in my remarks today about how the government's environmental policy is not sustainable, about how its economic policy is not sustainable and about how its approach to energy—the fiscal policy—is not sustainable. I have made some comments here about our immigration system and what the government is doing with respect to our immigration system. It does not have a plan. It is not being effective in terms of its handling of our immigration system.

We believe in an immigration system that is orderly, compassionate and legal. Canadians who see people walk across the border—people who want to come to Canada—want to see the process be fair and orderly. I said before that, when it comes to immigration, Canadians want us to use our heads and our hearts at the same time. They want us to be compassionate and strategic. They want us to think about how we can help as many people as possible and as many of the most vulnerable as possible. In fact, our immigration shadow minister, the member for Calgary Nose Hill, has called for the government to do more to facilitate private sponsorship of refugees.

What I hear when talking to different groups involved in the issue of private sponsorship of refugees is that they are very frustrated in dealing with the government. They see the government piling more red tape and creating more challenges for them when all they want to do is be able to sponsor the most vulnerable refugees and use their own money to do it. While the government has failed to properly respond to the issue of illegal border crossing, it is piling more red tape and challenges on those who are trying to privately sponsor our most vulnerable refugees. I think about members of my own family who were refugees and the benefits they had coming into communities of support. The value of a system of privately sponsored people who come into a system of support is that it works very well. We think that using that private channel and getting out of the way for these private sponsors can be very effective.

The member for Winnipeg North does not think this is a sustainability issue. However, I submit that it is, and Bill C-57 speaks precisely to the need for sustainable policy across government, for policy that can be indeed sustained in the long run, policy that can work and provide the best of the system going forward and also maintains and preserves public support for that system. When we hear criticisms of the immigration system, I think that the government immediately wants to polarize that discussion. However, from our perspective, there are things we can do to substantively improve our immigration system, to build greater public support for it and ensure that it works very well, and that is emphasizing compassion, order and legality in the context of our immigration system.

I will talk about another failure when it comes to sustainability from the government, which is to build a sustainable approach to Canada's voice in the world. If we are to sustain a strong voice in the world, it is important that Canada be principled and clear in its efforts to advance freedom, democracy, justice and human rights. However, we have not seen this from the government at all. We have

seen at best a very inconsistent approach when it comes to the advancement of freedom, democracy, human rights, justice and the rule of law.

● (1345)

One area where this is really evident is the Liberals' approach to China. There has been note of this over the last few weeks. Part of it is not just the relationship between events in Canada and China, it is the changing political reality in China itself. We see more and more aggressive action by the Chinese government.

There are a few things to note. We see the terrible abuse of Uighur Muslims, the violent crackdown we have seen, something we hoped to never have to talk about again in the 21st century. Canadians are asking their government to speak out on the violent abuses being imposed in this context. I hope that Canada could play a role in building a broader consensus around the response to these events, working together with our partners across the world. Countries like Pakistan and Algeria could do much more to call out and respond to the abuse by China of its Muslim minority communities.

We also see a crackdown against Christians, ongoing abuse of Falun Gong practitioners, increasing abuses in Tibet, the breaking of the agreement over the status of Hong Kong, more aggression toward Taiwan and aggressive action in the South China Sea. We also have the very worrying situation of the detention of Canadians.

How do we ensure Canada, in a long-term way, can sustain a strong voice on the world stage in the midst of these events? One thing we should not do is discredit our engagement on these issues by having a vital post be used as a way to say goodbye to a cabinet minister. The government's approach to China has been very ineffective, in part because it has not responded to the situation with the seriousness it deserves. Liberals have not put the appropriate, competent person in that situation.

Also we see how the Prime Minister's admiration, his comments about China's basic dictatorship, have undermined the credibility of Canada's approach to this. My hope is that Canada would have a long-term strategy for saying how we build that voice on the world stage. Unfortunately, we have not seen that from the government.

I talked earlier about the issue of pipelines. It may be of interest to people to know that the government put hundreds of millions of dollars into the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which is a Chinese-controlled investment bank that is building pipelines, not here in Canada but in Azerbaijan. A lot of people would ask why our government is spending money to build a pipeline in Azerbaijan as a tool for advancing Chinese foreign policy. How is that consistent with the values of sustainability? I would submit that it is not, but it is also a big mistake, a big failure by the Prime Minister, which is imposing costs on Canadians.

The government's argument for this, the reason it invested in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is so that Canadian companies could get those contracts. I have been to the bank's headquarters in Beijing and we were told that the bank has an open procurement policy and it will buy from Canadian companies and hire Canadians regardless of whether or not Canada is a member of the bank.

Government Orders

Therefore, the one argument the government had for supporting this multi-million dollar giveaway to a Chinese-controlled bank and entity of its foreign policy was to say that it was about opportunities for Canadian companies. That argument was blown out of the water in the first five minutes of a conversation with the folks at the bank's headquarters. If the government had actually done any kind of due diligence, it would have known that this was not the reality and that it was not achieving the objective that it said it was going to achieve.

As long as China is continuing this aggressive direction and is unresponsive to what we see as basic principles and values, why are we continuing to support this agent of its foreign policy? Why are we continuing to give money to this infrastructure bank? This is costing taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

● (1350)

If I were a Liberal MP, I would sure have a hard time explaining to people at home, who are struggling to get ahead, why they should have to pay for this particular failure of the government. Why should they have to pay for the failure of the government to do basic due diligence on an issue like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank? The failures of the government, in this respect and in so many others, are costing Canadians and we will see, as it continues to fail and tries at every turn to increase taxes, the real and growing costs of those failures on Canadians. A sustainable voice for Canada on the world stage should seek to advance our values, put those forward and do so in an effective way.

Bill C-57 seeks to introduce a sustainability framework for the government. It comes out of a report that was done at the environment committee and I think speaks in general to an important principle, the principle being that the decisions the government makes should be made with an eye to the future, that all the things government does should consider the impact on future generations, not just the impact on today, and that the way we approach every policy on immigration, foreign policy, the environment or the economy should not just be made with an eye to today but should be made with an eye to tomorrow. Why? Because if we fail to consider the impact of policies on tomorrow, then we will end up imposing additional costs and challenges for the future.

I am sorry to say this is exactly what we have seen from the government. Its lack of attention to the issue of long-term sustainability has led it to pursue policies that are imposing significant costs on Canadians and will continue to impose escalating costs on Canadians. Liberals are increasing taxes. Why? Because of their failure to take the steps necessary in all of these policy areas to strengthen our economy. This is imposing costs on Canadians.

We know that if they are successful in the next election, their plan is to impose higher taxes, to impose new costs. In the area of the carbon tax, for example, we see how they have imposed a carbon tax that is hurting Canadians who are struggling to get ahead and they will increase that carbon tax significantly. They will use every excuse they can to increase the carbon tax.

They are failing to pursue sustainable policy in so many areas, and that is why, in this message to the Senate, Liberals propose to reject the second amendment that was put forward. The second amendment proposes:

Performance-based contracts with the Government of Canada, including employment contracts, shall, where applicable, include provisions for meeting the applicable goals and targets referred to in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and any applicable strategy developed under section 11.

The amendment goes on to clarify the exact mechanism by which that would take place. It speaks precisely to how things would proceed in the context of employment contracts building sustainability there. The Senate, I think, wisely understands that if we are going to take an approach to sustainability—

● (1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The member for Calgary Shepard is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I sit very close to the member. The acoustics in this place are different from the former House and it is impossible to hear the member speaking with the noise level, not the noise level on the floor of the House but beyond the chamber. Perhaps we could get either the Sergeant-at-Arms or the guards to help keep the noise level down. I cannot hear the member sitting only a few rows away.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): That is a good point. Hon. members, having returned from their holiday, are being very respectful and working very well. It is not like the sounds are coming from inside the chamber. The hon. member is right. It is noise from outside the chamber, in the hallway, that is echoing in here. We will have to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to look into it.

Before the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan resumes, I will remind hon. members to keep it down. There is enough noise coming from the surroundings and we do not want to add to it.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Calgary Shepard for that point. Having three children at home, I am used to speaking when there is a lot of noise around but nonetheless I appreciate the point. It is an important one.

The issue of sustainability really speaks to the core of so many other conversations we have. Are we preparing for the future? The government is not interested in it. It is not interested in having a fiscal plan that would prepare us for the well-being of the next generation.

The Liberals promised in the last election that they would have a balanced budget after four years. They also said no more than \$10 billion in deficits in each of the three preceding years. They totally blew that target out of the water. They have added a massive, unprecedented amount of debt. They know this will impose significant cost burdens on all of us. It means that without a plan to pay this deficit off, there will be higher taxes and more challenges. Canadians who are already struggling to get ahead will have to pay more as a result of the failure of the Liberal government.

On the other hand, our party presents to Canadians an alternative positive plan, an approach that believes in the importance of balancing budgets not as an end in and of itself, not just because we like the look of a balanced budget on the balance sheet, but rather because we understand that for Canadians who want to get ahead and who want to pay lower taxes a balanced budget is important.

Statements by Members

Canadians understand the importance of a balanced budget in their own lives. They know that if the budget is balanced, that if we are paying down debt and we are not facing increasing burdens of interest on that debt, we can actually do more in the long term. If we have a balanced budget framework, the expenditures that are made in areas like social programs and tax cuts are sustainable changes. When we promise spending outside of the framework of a balanced budget, those promises are not at all sustainable. We do not know if they will continue because the government does not have a fiscal plan that guarantees it will be able to continue.

However, as the previous Conservative government did, when commitments are made in the framework of a balanced budget, to increase benefits, to provide tax reductions, to support the vulnerable or to invest in, for example, the housing first approach to homelessness, we know that those things will continue into the future.

That is the difference that a balanced budget makes to people at home. That is the difference it makes to people who are trying to get ahead. When there is no balance, when there is no plan to get to balance, we all have to pay for the debt and deficit associated with it. When there is a plan, then people who are working hard to get ahead know that they have the predictability of a fiscal plan to rely on, that the spending they are receiving will continue to increase into the future and that the commitments that are being made are a reality. When we do not have that fiscal plan in place, that is the kind of situation we are up against.

That is why it is important that the House not support the message to the Senate that the government has put forward, that we reject the particular message coming from the government and that, instead, we have an alternative message that recognizes the value of this particular amendment, which builds performance-based contracts into our understanding of sustainability and ensures the fullest understanding of sustainability in the context of how we do it.

• (1400)

The Speaker: The hon. member can resume his speech following question period.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Happy new year, Mr. Speaker.

It is an honour to deliver the very first member's statement in our new House of Commons. I am optimistic about what we can accomplish here.

In Centre Block, MPs implemented transfers for early learning and child care. I believe this House should support provinces in building universally accessible child care across Canada. In Centre Block, MPs passed the Canada Health Act. I am optimistic this House will finally add prescription drugs and dental treatment to our public health care system. In Centre Block, MPs adopted public pensions and child benefits. I hope this House will continue to

expand these social programs toward guaranteeing every Canadian a minimum level of income and a decent standard of living.

The workers who built this chamber did a great job. Now it is our job to deliver for working Canadians.

* * *

JAMES SHEA

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise in the House today to inform members of the passing of James Shea, who died December 29.

Jim believed in the potential of each child. Teacher, principal, lifelong educator, he served as chair and president of the Western Quebec School Board. He was the superintendent of the Ottawa Catholic School Board, and he also led Canadian Parents for French.

Jim's faith girded his actions. Jim and Theresa, his wife of 55 years, and their four girls were stalwart members of Saint Mark's church. It was there that I first met Jim some 20 years ago.

Jim always championed the underdog.

[Translation]

He was a tireless advocate for linguistic minority communities. He was very passionate about Canada's linguistic duality.

[English]

A strong advocate for inclusion, equity and justice for all, it was only last November that Jim was named as an adviser to the revamped court challenges program.

He was a great man who will be sorely missed by his family and friends and by our beloved country.

I thank Jim Shea.

* * *

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to recognize one of Huron—Bruce's most beloved sons and one of the most iconic Canadian hockey players of all time, Paul Henderson. Paul played 19 seasons in the NHL and the WHA, with over 1,000 games for the Red Wings, the Leafs, the Toronto Toros, the Birmingham Bulls and the Atlanta Flames.

Paul was inducted into the International Ice Hockey Hall of Fame and the Ontario Hall of Fame. He is in the Order of Canada and Order of Ontario. Members might even remember three great goals he scored in the '72 Summit Series in games six, seven and eight. True Huron—Bruce clutch hockey, to say the least.

The Canadian Press named Henderson's goal the "sports moment of the century". One thing missing is Paul's induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame. Don Cherry says that he should be inducted. That is good enough for me. I humbly request and ask the Hockey Hall of Fame selection committee to once again examine Paul's application and do the right thing. Let us have Paul Henderson in the Hockey Hall of Fame. I am backing Paul Henderson.

Statements by Members

●(1405)

BRAMPTON SOUTH

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to provide an update on events that took place in my riding of Brampton South over the break. I was pleased to host an open house that saw hundreds of residents and community leaders visit my local office. It was a great chance to connect with residents and hear their feedback.

On January 15, the BPW of Brampton hosted a meeting that featured four female entrepreneurs and recipients of the Brampton Board of Trade's 40 Under 40 award. I thank these remarkable women for their leadership.

I would like to thank the members of my youth council, who joined me for our first meeting of 2019. They provided me with valuable input on what matters to them, like fighting climate change and ensuring there are opportunities available for young people for today's innovation.

I want to thank the residents of Brampton South for their support, and I am so humbled to continue to represent them in the House.

* * *

OPIOIDS

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, over 10,000 Canadians have died from overdoses in the last three years alone. There are few communities in Canada that have not felt the scourge of the opioid crisis.

Unfortunately, my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford is not one of them. I want to recognize the efforts of community organizations and individuals who are on the front lines. They include the Westshore AVI Health Centre in Langford, the Our Cowichan Community Health Network and our brave first responders. They include people like Will Arnold, the owner of Experience Cycling, who is leading efforts in community cleanup; and the staff at the City of Duncan's overdose prevention site, which has reported thousands of visits with no deaths since operations began in 2017.

We need a federal government with the courage to declare a national emergency and explore the decriminalization and medical regulation of substance use. Using a criminal justice approach to tackle this health crisis has been an abject failure. We must do better. We can do better.

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*[Translation]***MUNICIPALITY OF SAINT-CONSTANT**

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (La Prairie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to wish my colleagues here in this new chamber all the best for the new year.

This year, 2019, is an important year for Saint-Constant, which was founded 275 years ago. On December 8, 1744, five men and five women gave representatives of the bishop the notarial deed to the eight acres of land in New France that would become Saint-Constant. In keeping with the tradition of the time of naming

parishes by associating the names of important figures to those of saints, the community was named in honour of Saint Constant and in memory of Constant Le Marchand de Lignery.

I invite all my constituents to keep an eye on the local newspapers to learn more about the special events that will be happening throughout the year and to spread the word, because, as per the theme of this year's celebrations, "Our history is your history".

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*[English]***43RD GENERAL ELECTION**

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are tired of paying for the Prime Minister's mistakes. His failure to balance the budget, combined with his out-of-control spending, is causing life to be unaffordable for many Canadians. It was recently reported that 46% of Canadians are less than \$200 away from insolvency, yet the Prime Minister is forcing a carbon tax that will drive up the costs of everything and do nothing for the planet. Canadians know that in order to keep running deficits and tweeting out taxpayer dollars to the world, the Prime Minister will continue to reach into the pockets of seniors, soccer moms and veterans.

However, there is hope. In October, Canadians can choose our leader. He will work to make life affordable for hard-working Canadians. He will balance the budget. He will keep his promises. The next nine months cannot go fast enough for me and the rest of Canadians who are sick of paying for the Prime Minister's mistakes.

* * *

ATTACK IN THE PHILIPPINES

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a cathedral is a place of worship, a place of prayer and a place of hope. What happened yesterday in Jolo, Philippines is a despicable act of cowardice, and I am sure I can speak on behalf of all my colleagues that we condemn this vicious act of terrorism.

My deepest condolences go out to all the families affected by this tragedy in the Philippines. May we pray for those who have left this world and for a speedy recovery for those injured.

Here at home, our thoughts are also with the Filipino and Catholic communities, and especially with the Filipino-Canadian Association of Vaughan. My prayers are with each and every one affected during this time of mourning. It is now more important than ever to keep our faith, and to have confidence, trust and belief in our values among our brothers and sisters. We all have a right to gather in safety and reverence, no matter what our religious affiliation is.

Statements by Members

●(1410)

[Translation]

COMMUNITY BICYCLE PARADE

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, an event called “Mon vélo raconte” was awarded the 2018 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming. Two organizations in the riding of Bourassa, the Société d'histoire et de généalogie de Montréal-Nord and the Artistes en arts visuels du Nord de Montréal, joined forces to achieve something remarkable. They organized a parade featuring 375 decked-out bicycles, each one telling a story, to celebrate Montreal's 375th anniversary. Over 15,000 volunteers and 3,000 children participated in making this artistic event happen. The award recognizes the organizations' community programming, and their success reflects on the entire North Montreal community.

I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the people who spearheaded this fantastic event, Sergio Gutiérrez and Jean-Paul Guiard.

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[English]

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the world marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day, on the 74th anniversary of the liberation of the notorious Nazi death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1945. The allied soldiers who entered that terrible place documented unspeakable horrors, documentation that inspired citizens and governments around the world to confront hatred, to promote human dignity and to pledge, “never again”.

In recent years, we have seen an alarming resurgence of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, despite the creation of inspirational architectural tributes around the world, like Canada's National Holocaust Monument just down the street, which is why it is so important that we continue to work to ensure that this generation and all future generations address Holocaust remembrance as a moral duty to educate, to reject anti-Semitism and hate speech and hate crimes in all forms, and to re-energize the original powerful covenant “never again”.

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, welcome to all my colleagues to this new chamber and best wishes to all for 2019. I rise today to highlight some of the concrete work our government is doing to help Canadians succeed economically.

Our government has cut taxes by 7% for nine million Canadians, enabling them to be more prosperous. In my riding of Don Valley East, the Canada child benefit has brought 9,000 families and 17,000 children out of poverty. Our national housing strategy has benefited 68 housing projects in my riding. Our CPP enhancement and increases in OAS and GIS have helped 16,000 seniors in my riding. These numbers say it all.

I am proud to be a part of a government that invests in its people and ensures that all Canadians have a chance at prosperity.

NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Hon. Kent Hehr (Calgary Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there was a time when some people and even some governments believed the best way to help those who struggled, who were poor, sick, disabled and homeless, was simply to leave them to those struggles. Sooner or later they would simply pull themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps and magically all would be solved. Our federal Liberal government disagrees and understands that sometimes people need a hand up.

That is why I am proud of our national housing strategy that invests \$40 billion to improve Canadians' access to safe and affordable housing, with the first project being built right in my home city of Calgary. Investing in housing affords people a sense of dignity, a sense of purpose and a place where they can build their lives. Let us think about it. How can one build a life if one has no home? In short, one cannot.

* * *

●(1415)

MYRON THOMPSON

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on January 12 our nation's flag flew at half-staff to honour Alberta's long-serving parliamentarian, Myron Thompson. Today, in this interim chamber, I am proud to give our respects to my mentor, friend and constituent, a man who proudly served central Alberta.

On a parliamentary visit to Washington, Myron was greeted by President George W. Bush, where his baseball experiences made him the centre of attention. Unfortunately, as a 19-year-old backcatcher behind Yogi Berra, Myron realized a different path would need to be followed. Myron and his family chose Sundre as their home. Myron was a teacher, a principal and mayor of Sundre before being elected in 1993 as the MP for Wild Rose and he served them well.

On December 19 I was honoured to be with Myron, his family and friends as the street in front of his home was named “Myron Thompson's Way”. On behalf of my constituents and a grateful nation, I will be honoured to present our flag to his beloved wife, Dot. Myron will be missed but his impact never forgotten.

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Hon. Andrew Leslie (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the fourth year in a row Canada has been named the number one country in the world for quality of life. Canada ranked highest for political stability and a strong job market. Unemployment is at historic lows, the economy is strong and more Canadians than ever before are hard at work.

In the context of small business, our government has been working hard to make it easier to do business here in Canada by lowering the small business tax rate from 11% to 9%.

[*Translation*]

We have many reasons to appreciate living in Canada, but we still have a lot of work to do. Let us keep working hard to ensure that all Canadians have a real and fair chance to succeed.

* * *

[*English*]

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Paul Henderson was born January 28, 1943, near Kincardine, Ontario. His first experience with hockey came in the basement of a Chinese restaurant operated by Charlie Chin, an immigrant who settled in Lucknow. Henderson played with Chin's sons. They bought him his first set of hockey equipment.

Paul Henderson played 13 NHL seasons with the Red Wings, Maple Leafs and Flames and five more with the World Hockey Association, scoring 376 goals and 758 points in 1,000 games. He is best known for leading Team Canada to victory at the 1972 Summit Series against the Soviet Union. It was a battle for hockey and cultural supremacy. He scored the game-winning goal in the sixth, seventh and eighth games, the last of which has become legendary, making him a national hero. It was voted the sports moment of the century.

Henderson is a member of the Order of Ontario and the Order of Canada and is in Canada's Sports Hall of Fame and in the International Ice Hockey Federation Hall of Fame.

Speaking for all goalies, I urge the Hockey Hall of Fame to complete this wonderful story by giving us relief by getting him out of our crease and into the hall where he belongs.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister shamefully refuses to ever balance the budget, hard-working Canadians are being forced to pay for his countless mistakes. These mistakes are leading to increased debt and higher taxes for all Canadians. Be under no illusions. If the Prime Minister is re-elected, taxes on everything will go up. While he may never have to worry about his own personal finances, hard-working Canadians are worried about paying their bills, because unlike the Prime Minister, Canadians know that budgets do not balance themselves. Canadians know that we cannot borrow our way out of debt. Canadians know that we cannot spend money that we do not have.

Routine Proceedings

Simply put, Canadians cannot afford another four years of the Prime Minister. Thankfully, relief is just around the corner. On October 21, only the Conservative Party will end deficits, balance the budget and help hard-working Canadians get ahead. We will fix the Prime Minister's mistakes, lower taxes and finally get Canada back on track.

* * *

● (1420)

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour Canadian hockey legend Paul Henderson.

It was September 28, 1972, 2:30 p.m., third period, with 34 seconds left to play, when he scored the goal heard around the world, or actually, around the universe. That goal won the critical game between Canada and the Soviet Union. Henderson actually scored seven goals in the eight games in 1972. He scored the game winner in game seven, with 2:03 to play, and thought that was it, that he would never score a goal like that again, but two days later, he scored the most famous goal in hockey history.

Paul Henderson was a most incredible player. A Memorial Cup winner, he led the OHL in goals, played in two Stanley Cup finals, played in two all-star games and was the last player in the original six to record a four-goal game. He played over 1,000 pro games, scoring over 700 points. Henderson should be in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Today is his 76th birthday. We wish Paul a very happy birthday. We thank him for the thrills and all the memories.

* * *

NEW MEMBER

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has received from the Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of the election and return of Mr. Barrett, member for the electoral district of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

NEW MEMBER INTRODUCED

Michael Barrett, member for the electoral district of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, introduced by the Hon. Andrew Scheer.

The Speaker: Let the member take his seat.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Prime Minister's foreign policy is a disaster, and Canadians are paying for his mistakes. Our international partners have no respect for the Prime Minister, and why should they? After clowning around in India and inviting a convicted terrorist along with him, he then was forced to take concession after concession from Donald Trump. He even angered our partners in Japan and Australia, and now we have the debacle with China. Why did the Prime Minister show such weakness and wait so long to fire his ambassador?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to answering the member's question shortly, but I think before we do, we need to take a moment to recognize and applaud the extraordinary women and men who worked so hard to build this beautiful chamber for us to serve in and to remember that if we who serve Canadians in this place work even half as hard as they worked to build this place for us, we will be very well served as a country indeed.

[Translation]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's foreign policy is a disaster, and Canadians are paying for his mistakes.

A convicted terrorist was invited to India. U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminum remain in place. The Prime Minister insulted our allies in Japan and Australia. Now we have the crisis with China.

When will the Prime Minister stop making Canadians pay for his mistakes?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are acting with integrity and taking decisive action in two key ways.

First of all, we want to keep Canadians safe, secure the release of the two Canadians arbitrarily detained in China and push for clemency for the third.

At the same time, we want to ensure that we always stand up for the rule of law and the independence of our judicial system and that we continue engaging with our allies around the world, to send a clear message that Canada will always defend the rule of law.

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FINANCE

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, money is the least of the Prime Minister's concerns. He has never had to keep a personal budget, so it comes as no surprise that he thinks budgets balance themselves.

He is rather good at racking up debt, especially when he is making Canadians pick up the tab.

When will the Prime Minister finally tell the truth and admit that he plans to raise taxes to pay for his mistakes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, our plan was to invest in people, the middle class, and our communities. That is why we lowered taxes for the middle class and asked the wealthy to pay more taxes.

Canadians have created 800,000 jobs over the past three years. We are seeing strong economic growth and we have the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years.

We want to keep investing in Canadians and the middle class, but the Conservatives want to give breaks to the wealthy because they think that is the way to create economic growth. They are wrong.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising the Prime Minister does not worry about Canadians' money. He has never had to worry about money. He has never had to balance a household budget, so he thinks budgets balance themselves. He thinks he can borrow his way out of debt and that others should pay for his mistakes, so it is no wonder the debt has grown three times more than what he promised. Why will he not tell the truth before the next election, that his wasteful spending and runaway deficits will mean higher taxes for Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that all we get from the Conservatives are warmed over Stephen Harper attacks and the economic plan that failed Canadians for 10 years. They continue to want to give tax breaks to the wealthiest, where we are focused on growing the middle class by investing in people and in their communities.

We lowered taxes for the middle class and raised them on the wealthiest one per cent. That has led to not only stronger growth than Stephen Harper ever saw but has led to the creation of 800,000 jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in over 40 years. We are going to continue to invest in Canadians.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, everything the Prime Minister just said is false. With his changes, the richest Canadians are paying less in tax, and hard-working Canadian families are paying more, and they are going to continue to pay more, because government documents show that the carbon tax will rise six times higher than what the Prime Minister now admits, which means higher gasoline costs and higher home heating costs. Canadians are already paying for his mistakes, so why is he also covering up the real cost of his carbon tax from Canadians?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we lowered taxes for the middle class. The only way the Conservatives can make those numbers work is if they completely ignore a policy they voted against, the Canada child benefit. The Canada child benefit has made more difference in the lives of hard-working Canadians than any other policy in recent history. They voted against it. Maybe they do not want to talk about it because they plan to take it away from Canadians. We are going to continue to invest in Canadians.

When it comes to climate change, it has been 274 days since the member opposite promised a climate plan for Canadians. Where is that plan?

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSING

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is becoming increasingly difficult to access housing in Canada. It is a problem for buyers, who are shut out of many markets, and for low-income renters, who are affected by the shortage of affordable and social housing.

In British Columbia, for example, tent cities are springing up in places such as Maple Ridge, Nanaimo and Victoria, right here in Canada in the 21st century.

Will this urgent situation be taken into consideration in the next Liberal budget?

Will immediate investments be made to address the current crisis?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we certainly recognize that Canadians deserve safe, affordable and accessible housing. That is why we created the first national housing strategy, which is making unprecedented investments in housing. To date, it has already helped more than one million Canadians find housing.

However, we know that there is more to be done. We will continue to invest in Canadians to ensure that everyone has safe and accessible housing.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that sure sounds great, but 90% of that money will not be allocated before the upcoming federal election, not before 2020, but housing is desperately needed right now.

More than 1.5 million Canadian households are in urgent need today. New investments are needed right now, not in three or four years.

There are solutions. For example, the government could spur investments by removing the federal portion of the GST/HST from the cost of building new affordable housing units. The Liberals should know how this works. That is what they promised in 2015, but they have since shelved the idea.

I will repeat my question.

They will have one last chance with the federal budget. Will they invest and act now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I want to point out that the historic investments we have made in housing in recent years have helped more than one million Canadians find affordable housing.

We know that more money and more solutions are needed. However, make no mistake, the investments we have already made and that we continue to make in the national housing strategy are making a real difference in people's lives.

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, just last week, media reports said that 46% of all Canadians are now only \$200 away from financial insolvency in a month, but instead of bringing in immediate relief for people facing a housing crisis and crushing personal debt, the Liberals' priority has been to give billions of dollars in corporate giveaways.

The current Liberal government continues to tell Canadians to wait for real action on housing. Will the Prime Minister commit to making different choices this year? Will he make affordable housing a top priority in this year's budget?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past three years—indeed, over the past three budgets—we made housing a priority for Canadians. We know that it needs to be safe, affordable and accessible for all Canadians. That is why we moved forward with a historic national housing strategy that re-engages the federal government in housing right across the country. We have not waited to invest. On the contrary, the significant investments we have already made have helped close to a million Canadians access more affordable housing. That is making a real difference now and, yes, many years into the future.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that answer shows how out of touch the Prime Minister is, and people know it.

Sarah, for example, is a nurse with three children who is struggling to find affordable housing in Burnaby, B.C. The only places she can find will take her entire paycheque, leaving no money for food or anything else. That is the reality of the housing crisis.

Mayors from across the country are raising housing with the Prime Minister today, saying that we need action now. Will the Liberals stop siding with corporations and side with people who need affordable housing now?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to sit down with the big city mayors this morning, who thanked me and congratulated me for the work we have done on investing in housing right across the country.

Oral Questions

We are making a real impact in the lives of Canadians as we invest in housing that is making a significant difference in people's lives. We will continue to do just that while we focus on making a concrete and sure difference in the lives of Canadians right across the country.

* * *

[Translation]

FINANCE

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by the end of their term, the Liberals will have racked up a deficit of more than \$80 billion. Back in 2015, however, the Prime Minister formally promised to balance the budget by the end of this year.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has confirmed that, due to the irresponsibility of the Prime Minister and his Minister of Finance, we will not see a balanced budget until 2040.

The Prime Minister loves telling everyone that budgets balance themselves.

Could he tell us right now who is going to pay for these deficits?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear that we are making investments, which are critical to improving Canadians' lives. We have invested in the middle class and delivered significant results.

Unemployment is now at its lowest in over 40 years, and growth is strong. We are going to continue making investments. It is important for the future, and we can do it in a fiscally responsible way.

• (1435)

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are in a new House of Commons, but we are getting the same old answers.

Why will the Prime Minister not just tell Canadians the truth?

He has no plan, and sadly, it is Canadians who will have to pay for his inept and irresponsible fiscal management. The public should not be forced to pay for his failures, his mistakes and his irresponsible and out-of-control fiscal management.

Will he at least have the guts to tell workers and Canadians who is going to pay for these deficits?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the good news is that Canadians are now better off thanks to our approach. Our investments have created more jobs across the country. It is true. What is more, middle class Canadians are paying fewer taxes. That is for sure.

Our approach is much better for Canadians, and we have been able to do all this while maintaining a debt-to-GDP ratio that works for the future of our country.

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the finance minister promised Canadians that they would get rid of the deficit by this year, and they have clearly failed. We find ourselves in a situation where the rich are actually paying less taxes, and in their spending review, the Liberals did not find any ways to save money but did find ways to spend more. Fail.

Canadians will ultimately pay for these mistakes. Will the Prime Minister admit to Canadians that his higher deficits will lead to higher taxes for Canadians?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have done over the last more than three years is make a real, important difference for Canadians, with higher growth rates and lower unemployment. Clearly, the approach we have taken has worked.

The options that we had in the last election were the approach of austerity and cuts, which was being proposed by the Conservative Party at that time, versus our approach of investing in Canadians. What we have been able to show is that our approach works. We can do it in a fiscally responsible way, and we will continue to have a plan that makes sense for Canadians.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, his talking points are all an attempt to make sure that they do not panic the flock before the fleecing. That is what it is all about.

How can the finance minister stand here and honestly say that Canadians are doing better when 46% of Canadians feel that they are \$200 away from insolvency?

I know the Prime Minister and the finance minister have not felt this, but I can tell them that people lose sleep and that the anxiety is crushing. Canadians know that they are not in good shape, and they are afraid of these new taxes.

When will the Prime Minister level with them and just tell them that more taxes are coming?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear.

Actually, middle-class anxieties are something we have been very focused on from day one. That is why we reduced taxes on middle-class Canadians, a policy that the Conservatives voted against. That is why we put in place the Canada child benefit, helping nine out of 10 families with more money. On average, middle-class families with two kids, this year, will have \$2,000 more than they had when the last Conservative government was here in 2015.

We are helping with middle-class anxieties, while the opposition continues to vote against policies that help these people.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 2019 will be a historic year. This year, we were scheduled to move into a new House of Commons, and we have done that. This year, the Liberals promised to balance the budget, but that is not going to happen. That is the Liberal reality.

We were supposed to get back to zero deficit this year, but instead we have a \$30-billion deficit.

*Oral Questions***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

I congratulate the President of the Treasury Board on her appointment. Could she please assure Canadians that she does not believe that budgets balance themselves and tell them that, unfortunately, a Liberal deficit will lead to tax hikes for all Canadians? That is the reality.

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously, we have a plan. It is clear that investing in the middle class is working. Now, our economy is working for the middle class. The alternative, an austerity approach, is not really a plan since it involves making cuts or increasing taxes. That is the Conservatives' plan.

Our approach involves lowering taxes for the middle class, and Canada is better off because of it.

• (1440)

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that my question was for the President of the Treasury Board. Are men answering the questions now that it is 2019? The issue here is that, in 2015, they promised to eliminate the deficit, but there is now a \$30-billion deficit. That is a fact.

I would like to give the President of the Treasury Board another chance. Will she tell Canadians that, unfortunately, Liberal deficits will lead directly to higher taxes for all Canadians?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the approach we have chosen is good for Canada. Our approach has made things better for the middle class. We know there are inequalities within the middle class, and that is why we lowered their taxes. We have also made things better for Canadian families with the Canada child benefit. Thanks to our measures, our economy is growing. Our approach is working and I hope future governments will adopt a similar approach so that we can ensure a bright future for our country.

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[*English*]

HOUSING

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, across Canada people are struggling with extreme cold temperatures. For the 30,000 Canadians who are homeless, finding warm shelter can be a matter of life or death. Shelters are near capacity and people seeking refuge in tent cities are being served with eviction notices. Where are people to go? They cannot wait 10 years for a national housing strategy to ramp up.

Will the Liberal government step up and legislate, as promised, the right to housing for all Canadians—yes or no?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to say that our government believes very strongly in the right of every Canadian to have a safe, affordable and accessible home. That is why, since 2015, we have invested \$5.7 billion in addition to the dollars already forecast to help a million families in Canada have access to a safe and affordable home, and that is why, in November 2017, we announced the first-ever national housing strategy, which is going to reduce chronic homelessness by at least 50% and renew federal leadership and partnership in housing.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are now three weeks into the state of emergency, the deplorable humanitarian crisis in Cat Lake. Temperatures have plunged to -55°, we have hundreds of people huddled in squalid conditions, people are at risk, and yet the best the minister has been able to do after three weeks is to promise to send some bureaucrats to check on the situation. That is not going to cut it.

What steps will the minister take to meet with the leadership, to put in place an emergency response team now and to visit Cat Lake so he can see the deplorable conditions that the people of Cat Lake are living in? What will he do?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first nations communities are of utmost importance. I have spoken with Chief Keewaykapow and I have affirmed our commitment to working with Cat Lake to address the community's housing needs. Officials will be meeting with the leadership there tomorrow to work on an action plan to help them work on the serious challenges that they confront. We will continue working in partnership with first nations communities to advance their priorities and to support community-led solutions.

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[*Translation*]

FINANCE

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister likes to brag about his vast family fortune, but since he has never had to balance a family budget, he thinks budgets balance themselves. That is why he promised that the budget would be balanced by 2019. Now he is saying it is going to take another 20 years. It is obvious that taxes will increase as a result of this massive, out-of-control deficit.

When will the Prime Minister admit that his deficits are costing Canadians a lot of money?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite the contrary. We lowered taxes for the middle class. In Carleton, for example, 30,000 middle-class Canadians have seen their taxes cut. On top of that, 16,000 people in that riding are receiving the Canada child benefit. That is what is really going on with middle class Canadians. We have made life better for them and we will continue to invest in the middle class to improve our economy and make things better for these people.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Actually, Mr. Speaker, he has raised taxes on the middle class by \$800, taking away the child benefit, the tuition tax credit, the tax credit for kids' sports. He took away the tuition tax credit for textbooks. He took away the education tax credit. That does not even include the carbon tax. We ain't seen nothing yet. This massive Liberal deficit will lead to even more massive tax hikes after the election.

Why will the Liberals not admit that Canadians will pay the price for their increased debt?

• (1445)

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are getting the benefit from the choice they made.

Let us be very specific. Canadians who live in the riding of Carleton, 30,000 of them, have had a reduction in their taxes. One cannot pick and choose benefits. The fact of the matter is that the introduction of the Canada child benefit together with the reduction in taxes means that people are better off. There are 16,000 children in the Carleton region who are getting about \$4 million more than they were before this government came into power.

We are going to continue to make investments. The good news is that our approach is working and our economy is doing well.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals targeted soccer moms with tax increases when they took away the children's fitness tax credit. They targeted students with tax increases when they cancelled the education and textbook tax credits. They targeted passengers with tax increases when they took away the transit tax credit. That does not even include the carbon tax on heat, groceries and gas, nor does it include higher payroll taxes. It will only get worse.

This massive Liberal deficit will lead to higher taxes for Canadians. Why will they not tell people that before the election?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact what Canadians chose in 2015 was a government that was going to make investments as opposed to an approach that was going to bring in austerity, to actually put us in a situation where we were trying to balance the budget on the backs of Canadians by either raising taxes or cutting benefits.

We have a plan, investing in Canadians. The question is: What would be the Conservative plan? Would it be to cut the Canada child benefit, or would it be to raise taxes on middle-class Canadians? We have been clear. We are helping middle-class Canadians. We would like to hear what they would plan on doing.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we originally brought in the child benefit, three things happened: one, the budget was balanced; two, we lowered taxes rather than raising them, as the Liberal government is now doing; and three, Liberals claimed wrongly that parents would just blow it all on beer and popcorn. After all these years, they have finally come around to our point of view on that particular issue. Unfortunately, they have taxed away the benefit with higher taxes in other areas.

Will they admit that it will only get worse when this present deficit turns into future tax increases?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the fictional world inhabited by the member for Carleton, he pretends that things that are true are not true.

We cannot say it any more clearly. For people who earn between \$45,000 and \$90,000, we reduced taxes in that category by 7%, which means that people earning up to \$200,000 or so actually have reduced taxes; but for the one per cent, we did increase taxes. For people who are raising their children, we gave them the Canada child benefit, much improved. Nine out of 10 families are better off with \$2,000 more this year than in 2015. The facts are clear.

* * *

[Translation]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations Human Rights Committee ruled that Canada must eliminate all forms of discrimination that indigenous women face under the Indian Act. We had that debate two years ago and the government's term is coming to an end.

Will the Prime Minister finally keep the promise he made four years ago and repeal all legislation unilaterally imposed on first nations?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, gender equality is a fundamental human right.

Bill S-3 eliminates gender discrimination arising from the Indian Act. We have appointed Ms. Dumont-Smith as the minister's special representative. She will work with our partners on a plan to remove the 1951 cut-off date and make more extensive changes to the registration, membership and citizenship of—

• (1450)

The Speaker: The member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after Ms. Meng was arrested, did the government immediately make representations to the Chinese authorities explaining its actions or did it just calmly wait for the situation to blow up?

Mr. McCallum's departure is just the latest example of the government's lack of preparation. This chaos is unacceptable.

How can Canadians have confidence in a government that is flying by the seat of its pants when dealing with a global superpower?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has done a great deal of work on this file.

Our top priority is the well-being and safety of the Canadians detained by China. We now have the support of many of our allies, such as Australia, the European Union, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Spain. All these countries have openly supported the Canadian position.

* * *

[English]

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has proven that it is a strong advocate for small businesses and is committed to helping them start up, scale up and access new markets. As a small business owner myself in my riding of Kitchener Centre, I know that small businesses employ so many of my constituents and keep our economy strong.

Could the Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion tell the House what our government has done to make it easier for our small businesses?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has lowered the small business tax to 9%, giving small business owners up to \$7,500 in savings. We have also cut red tape by removing 450 administrative burdens, making it easier for businesses to do business. We are working hard for Canada's small businesses because they are the backbone of our Canadian economy.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have lost confidence in the Prime Minister's ability to stand up for our interests abroad.

The number of diplomatic disasters continues to rise. His trip to India was a failure, he has angered our partners in the Asia-Pacific region, he failed with NAFTA, and now our relations with China are in trouble. He fired his ambassador, and his Minister of Foreign Affairs is nowhere to be found, even though there are lives at stake. Canadians are paying for the Prime Minister's failures.

Does he even have a plan for China?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to China, our top priority is the safety and well-being of the Canadians detained in China. This is a priority for the Prime Minister, for me and for the entire government. These arbitrary detentions are unacceptable to Canadians and to the international community.

The Prime Minister and I have both spoken to a number of international partners. We will stand by the statements of support we have received from many countries.

[English]

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have lost confidence that the Prime Minister can lead our country on the world stage. His list of diplomatic disasters is rising. It includes his appalling India trip. He

Oral Questions

has infuriated our Asia-Pacific trade partners. He failed Canada on NAFTA. Now our relationship with China is in tatters. He fired his ambassador. His foreign affairs minister is missing in action.

The consequences are dire. Lives are hanging in the balance. Canadians are paying for the failures of the Prime Minister. Does he even have a plan for China?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are so many false claims in that question that it is hard to even know where to start. However, let me try.

When it comes to our partners in the Asia-Pacific, Canada is proud to have signed the CPTPP, which is entering into force. In fact, we are the only G7 country with trade agreements with every other G7 country. That is a diplomatic and trade triumph.

• (1455)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the arrest of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou took place on December 1, but the Prime Minister received an unprecedented special briefing several days before this high-profile arrest.

My questions are simple. On what date was the Prime Minister first briefed and by whom?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to Meng Wanzhou, let me be very clear about the Government of Canada's position. First of all, Canada is a rule-of-law country and we are conducting a fair, unbiased and transparent legal proceeding. In fact, Madam Meng is currently on bail, as the court has ruled. There has been, as is correct, no political involvement in the process. Canada respects our international legal commitments, including our extradition treaty with the United States.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess if I want straight answers on China, I should ask John McCallum. McCallum's comments show that the Liberal government has played politics with this serious diplomatic dispute with China from the start.

Therefore, was the justice minister demoted for speaking truth to power to uphold the rule of law and stop the political games being played by the Prime Minister and his hand-picked ambassador?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only people playing political games when two Canadians are in a difficult situation are the members opposite, and that is truly reprehensible.

When it comes to the case of Ms. Meng, Canada is a rule-of-law country. We are proud to be a rule-of-law country. We have honoured our extradition treaty commitments, as we honour all of our international treaty commitments, and Ms. Meng has access to our impartial and fair judicial system.

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last year, when Greyhound announced it was ceasing operations, constituents in my riding were rightfully worried about how they would get from town to town. Without reliable transit, people cannot access crucial services like health care, shelters for women fleeing violence or urgently needed addiction treatment. In rural areas, people relied on Greyhound to travel to these services.

The Liberal government said it would provide funding, but we have not seen it, and people are still unable to travel. When will the government provide safe, affordable and accessible transit for rural and remote communities?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we fully recognize that, when Greyhound departed at the end of October last year, it would leave an absence of public transportation in the western provinces, and we immediately started working on a solution. We are working with the provinces, including British Columbia, my colleague's home province. We will be there if they request us to help them on a cost-sharing basis. We have given that undertaking.

* * *

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Big City Mayors' Caucus met in Ottawa today with a very clear message for the Prime Minister and his ministers.

The Liberals promised them an infrastructure bonanza, but they are still waiting. Canadians need investments in public transit, and so does the planet. I also want to mention the small municipalities across the country that are still waiting for the funding they were promised.

When are the Liberals finally going to keep the promises they made to municipalities?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her question. The Prime Minister and I both met with the big city mayors this morning, and I had a chance to talk to the mayors about our historic infrastructure investment plan, which will provide more than \$180 billion for infrastructure. A lot of our investments are going towards public transit, green infrastructure and our regions. I also want to remind my colleague that more than 470,000 projects were approved between November 2015 and January 2019. Over 70% of those projects, representing more than \$18 billion, are under construction. We will keep investing in Canadians.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the carbon tax will cost the average Canadian family over \$2,500 this year. That is 11¢ more for a litre of gas, \$250 more for home heating, \$100 a month more for groceries and that is just the beginning. Canadians know the Liberal carbon tax is not an environmental

policy; it is a tax policy, punishing soccer moms, seniors on fixed incomes and small business owners.

Why is the Prime Minister forcing Canadians to pay for his mistakes with punishing new taxes on everyone?

• (1500)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that climate change is having a huge cost in terms of our economy and on lives, but we have a plan that works, that makes life affordable and that makes sure we are creating jobs in the future.

Let us talk about the plan. I want to reassure the member that we have a new climate action incentive. We are putting a price on pollution, and a family of four in Ontario will get \$307 back. We are also investing in public transit across the country. We are supporting innovators and entrepreneurs who are created the solutions of tomorrow. Unfortunately, the Conservatives opposite are just harking back to the days of the Harper Conservatives. They have no—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' plan is actually punishing Canadians for heating their homes, driving their kids to dance practice, hockey practice, wherever their daily routines are taking them, and the Prime Minister is failing to help Canadians get ahead. His carbon tax will cost them over \$1,000 more on household essentials that they need and his government plans to make it six times more expensive than that.

Canadians are already paying for his failures. When will the Prime Minister come clean and admit the real costs of the carbon tax?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are already paying the price of climate change and it is going up every single year. It is a human cost. It is a cost to the economy. However, there is good news. We can actually tackle climate change in a way that works, that makes life affordable and that creates good jobs.

Let me talk about the climate action incentive. We are putting a price on pollution. It will no longer be free to pollute in the country. A family of four in Ontario will get \$307 back. A family of four in Manitoba will get \$339 back. A family of four in Saskatchewan will get \$609 back.

We can tackle climate change—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

Oral Questions

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that the Liberals' plan on carbon taxes is going to hurt small businesses and it is going to hurt families. Farmers in my riding did not inherit a family fortune like the Prime Minister. They have to worry about making ends meet and cannot afford the Prime Minister's new carbon tax. Worse yet, government documents now admit that to make its plan work the carbon tax will have to be six times higher than the current rate.

When will the Prime Minister come clean with farmers about his plan to significantly increase the cost of everything from fertilizer to shipping products to market?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, farmers are feeling the impacts of climate change and they are paying the price. Business people are feeling the impacts of climate change and they are paying the price. Soccer moms are feeling the impacts of climate change and they are paying the price. That is why we have a plan that if works is going to make life more affordable, is going to put more money in the pockets of families and is going to create good jobs.

We need to take action on climate change. To not have a plan is irresponsible. It has now been 274 days since the party opposite said that it would have a plan. Where is its climate plan?

The Speaker: Order, please. The member for Edmonton West will please come to order.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.):

[Member spoke in Cree as follows:]

ō-Δ·CŁ·9° Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism b p <ř·Ń·ŃΔ·ā> ř ĆσU Δř b>Δřx ěC bāC ∇b· řā <řCŁ· ě·Δ ř·∇· Δřāx ĀPŃ·Δ·ā ěC bāC. σ řāř·C∇Ń ěL b <ř·ŃCĉđ ě·Ń United Nations b ř·ĉŃ· ěř·∇· Δřāx ĀPŃ·Δ·ā 2019 b <ř·Ĝ·.

[Cree text interpreted as follows:]

Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism please update the House on Canada's role in the initiative and work being done to protect and revitalize indigenous languages in Canada? I am proud to say that the United Nations has declared 2019 the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

[English]

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Winnipeg Centre for his question.

[Translation]

He has always been a courageous and passionate defender of indigenous languages.

[English]

Most of Canada's indigenous languages are in danger due to deliberate past actions, and Canada is proud to join the world in

marking the International Year of Indigenous Languages. We thank the inspiring indigenous languages leaders for their tireless work.

[Translation]

I look forward to soon tabling a bill that was drafted in cooperation with indigenous peoples. It will be a historic moment.

• (1505)

[English]

Together, we can and we will change history.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has spent over a billion dollars on 40,000 illegal border crossers, with more crossing every day. However, today, the forum that allows parents and grandparents of new Canadians who are trying to legally migrate to Canada for all of 2019 opened and closed in just 10 minutes. Therefore, under the Liberals, illegal border crossers get a red carpet welcome and legal immigrants get the door shut in their face.

Will the Prime Minister admit that Canadians reject having to pay for his unfair immigration practices?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on critical, failed records, under the Harper Conservatives, Canadians only had 5,000 spaces to sponsor parents or grandparents. We have increased that to 20,000. We have 20,000 spaces now that allows Canadians and permanent residents to sponsor their parents and grandparents. In addition to that, we have reduced the backlog that the Conservatives left us by 80%. We have simplified the process.

We will continue to be ambitious in immigration. We will leave the fearmongering to the other side.

The Speaker: Order, please. Having asked the question, I would ask the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill to hear the answer and not interrupt throughout it.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in a document submitted to the National Energy Board, the Trans Mountain team admitted that pipeline-related marine shipping will have, and I quote, “significant environmental effects”. The population of southern resident killer whales is down to less than 75 and this project puts an endangered species at risk, but it's no big deal: it is only business, so that justifies it. It is all there in black and white.

Will the Liberals stop saying that the economy and the environment go hand in hand? That is not true of the economy they are building.

Will the Liberals finally admit that by buying the Trans Mountain pipeline they sided with big business and gave up on protecting the environment? That is the truth.

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issues associated with the southern resident killer whale are very important. It is part of a broader conversation around biodiversity.

There are three significant challenges for the killer whales: access to food, issues around marine shipping and contaminants in the water, all of which exist today, all of which are the product of industrialization over the past several decades.

We are working very hard through the whales initiative to ensure we put the killer whales back on an appropriate path to success, and ensure that the environment and economy go forward hand in hand.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, recently, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, along with the Premier of P.E.I., signed a framework agreement with Mi'kmaq people to address outstanding issues of Mi'kmaq rights and title.

The Mi'kmaq leadership see this agreement as the beginning of a process to determine how all P.E.I. Mi'kmaq, both on and off reserve, will benefit from their rights, today and into the future.

Beyond this one agreement, could the minister explain the government's progress on renewing relationships with the indigenous peoples of Canada?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Malpeque for his hard work.

In P.E.I., we did sign a framework agreement with Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations and the province to establish a path forward to the recognition and implementation of Mi'kmaq inherent and treaty rights.

Chief Matilda Ramjattan said that this agreement was an important first step in rebuilding their nation and bringing "socio-economic health to our people".

In P.E.I. and coast to coast to coast, our government is advancing reconciliation by working with our partners to realize self-determination.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the National Assembly unanimously passed a motion calling for the immediate construction of the second supply ship, the *Obelix*, at the Davie shipyard. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister is showing little respect for Quebec and shipyard workers.

Even the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence, which has a Liberal majority, pointed to "the complete loss of an at-sea replenishment capability".

Why does the Prime Minister have so little respect for the Royal Canadian Navy and Quebec shipyard workers, and why is he using

statements previously made by CAF members when there are lengthy delays in the—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of National Defence.

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, our government is committed to making sure that the Canadian Armed Forces have all the tools necessary to do their job. That is what our defence policy is committed to.

I want to thank the workers at Davie for the Asterix. They are playing a vital role. We have started steel cutting on the early blocks of the two permanent joint supply ships and look forward to having those in the water.

* * *

● (1510)

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Quebec is calling for a single tax return. The Prime Minister replied, "A unanimous motion from the National Assembly? Good Lord, that never happens!"

After ridiculing Quebec, now the entire machinery of government is engaged in a campaign of fear. To listen to the Liberals, we would think that the 10 plagues of Egypt were upon us. The worst part is that this strategy is working, because the NDP has already caved.

Why is the government so bent on having two tax returns? What is it afraid of? Is it afraid that Quebec will perform better?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the CRA employs more than 5,500 people throughout Quebec and is a major economic driver in towns such as Shawinigan and Jonquière.

Unlike the Bloc Québécois and the Conservatives, we are not jeopardizing those jobs. That said, we remain open to working with Revenu Québec to make it easier for Quebecers to file their tax returns.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, an Angus Reid poll released last week clearly shows that meeting Quebec's demands, such as the single tax return, does not pay off in English Canada. In fact, we have every reason to believe that meeting any of Quebec's demands would cost points in the rest of Canada.

This means that the Liberals are going to deny Quebecers the opportunity of filing a single tax return just to win votes in English Canada.

Are we to understand that the Liberals have picked a side and are obviously not siding with Quebecers?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, combatting international tax evasion is a priority for our government, as it is for Quebecers.

Oral Questions

Information exchange agreements with our international partners remain essential to tackling international tax evasion. A single revenue administration managed by Quebec would make it harder for Canada to respect its international legal obligations. It could also cause problems when it comes to ratifying international agreements. Quebec is simply not properly equipped to combat international tax evasion.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, CCF): Mr. Speaker, it has been an interesting week for Canadian foreign policy. The government recognized an opposition MP declaring himself President of Venezuela. I wish I had thought of that. I am going to resist the temptation to declare myself Prime Minister of Canada. Unfortunately, there are many governments around the world whose democratic legitimacy is questionable.

Is Canadian government policy now to endorse coups against all of them?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member to talk to his former colleagues in the NDP. Canadians need an apology from the member for Churchill—Keewatinook Aski and the NDP candidate in York—Simcoe for their defence of a dictatorship that has killed hundreds and injured thousands of peaceful protesters. If the NDP members cannot take a firm and clear stance on the fight of the people of Venezuela for democracy, I do not know what they can take a clear position on.

* * *

[Translation]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of an illustrious Canadian.

[English]

Although three members, during Statements by Members, have already stolen my thunder a little in relation to our mystery guest, I am pleased they covered important aspects of his career.

Thirty-four seconds was how much time was left in the third period on September 28, 1972. Schools had stopped, my class was watching television and learning how to play hockey, which is good. However, that was how much time was remaining in the 1972 Canada-Russia series when this gentleman scored the winning goal and gave Canada a victory for the ages: Mr. Paul Henderson.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I invite all members to drop into Room 233-S behind the chamber to meet this great Canadian.

● (1515)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Mr. Speaker, given that Netflix has rejected the request made by the Quebec government, on behalf of the people of Lac-Mégantic and all Quebecers, that it stop using images of the

Lac-Mégantic disaster, I wish to seek consent for the following motion: That the House of Commons call on Netflix Inc. to withdraw from its catalogue all images of the Lac-Mégantic disaster, which took the lives of 47 people, and that Netflix Inc. provide financial compensation to the Lac-Mégantic community for having used these images for entertainment purposes without regard for the trauma experienced by the residents, survivors and friends and families of the victims.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

[English]

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties and if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, given the enormous cultural significance of hockey in Canada, the House encourages the Hockey Hall of Fame to induct Paul Henderson in recognition of his incredible contribution to Canadian hockey and its history.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, you invited members to an official smudging ceremony in the House this morning. This was a wonderful idea, but I am disappointed that 99% of this ceremony was in English and that there was no interpretation.

I have been a member in this House for 35 years, and interpretation has always been available for important events or official ceremonies, or else the ceremony has been conducted in both official languages. There are francophone indigenous communities, like the Abenaki community, that could have participated in this ceremony along with the Algonquin people. This smudging ceremony could have then been in both official languages.

In the future, I hope everyone remembers that there are two official languages here. In this country's history, the indigenous peoples were here first, then francophones were here for 200 years, and after that the anglophones arrived. Clearly, there is every reason to include French in our official ceremonies.

Routine Proceedings

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel for raising this very important matter. I agree that French should be a part of all ceremonies in the House of Commons.

Mr. Luc Thériault: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent for the following motion: That the House request that the results of the secret ballot on Bill C-421, an act to amend the Citizenship Act with respect to adequate knowledge of French in Quebec, to be held January 29 and 30, 2019, be disclosed at the same time as the voting results.

The Speaker: Does the member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1520)

[Translation]

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

The Speaker: Pursuant to section 79.2(2) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present the House two reports from the Parliamentary Budget Officer.

The first is entitled, “PBO and Finance Canada Long-term Projection Comparison”.

The second is entitled, “Costing 2018 Fall Economic Statement and Off-Cycle Measures”.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (B), 2019-20

A message from Her Excellency the Governor General transmitting supplementary estimates (B) for the financial year ending March 31, 2020, was presented by the President of the Treasury Board and read by the Speaker to the House.

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INTERIM ESTIMATES, 2019-20

A message from Her Excellency the Governor General transmitting Interim Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020, was presented by the President of the Treasury Board and read by the Speaker to the House.

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[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 124 petitions.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, Canada's report with respect to international labour law and labour organization instruments adopted at the 106th session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Pat Finnigan (Miramichi—Grand Lake, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food in relation to advancements of technology and research in the agriculture industry that can support Canadian exports.

● (1525)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues from Red Deer—Mountain View and Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, who worked on this dissenting opinion with me.

Witnesses who spoke about the carbon tax said that this additional tax was going to disadvantage Canada both abroad and at home. This dissenting opinion aims to clarify the issue and make an additional recommendation to the government to ensure that Canadian exporters can increase trade without being hampered by a new tax, as well as avoid increasing the tax burden on the agriculture and agri-food sector. This tax will not encourage farmers to invest more in technological advances. Several witnesses said that the technological advances being introduced by their companies are environmentally responsible. Farmers look after their land and care about the environment because it is their livelihood. One witness even said that he already had a plan to reduce his company's environmental footprint.

The report as presented does not reflect what witnesses said about the negative impact that a carbon tax will have on the agriculture and agri-food industry. That is why our recommendation is that the government eliminate the carbon tax, which hurts Canada's international competitiveness and hinders agriculture and agri-food innovation.

* * *

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-424, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (sexual exploitation).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak at first reading of my private member's bill, an act to amend the Criminal Code, regarding sexual exploitation. I thank the member for Oxford for seconding this motion.

Routine Proceedings

I am also pleased to be the first member to move a private member's bill in this new West Block House of Commons. This bill addresses the very real concerns of the people of Perth—Wellington, particularly those in Stratford. Our community was angered when we learned last year that an individual who was employed to work with children and people living with disabilities was found to have sexually exploited a person with a disability in our community. This individual pleaded guilty to obtaining sexual services for consideration but was sentenced to a mere monetary fine and probation. This lenient sentence sparked outrage in my community.

The bill would prevent such situations from occurring again by adding a provision to the Criminal Code to make it an aggravating circumstance in sentencing when the victim of the crime is a person with a mental or physical disability. Further, it would ensure that the sentencing guidelines for those who sexually exploit children or people living with disabilities are consistent and appropriate for these terrible crimes.

In short, the bill would provide stricter sentences for those who take advantage of the most vulnerable in our society: young people and persons living with a disability.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

**CANADA–MADAGASCAR TAX CONVENTION
IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018**

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.) moved that Bill S-6, An Act to implement the Convention between Canada and the Republic of Madagascar for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income, be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

* * *

PETITIONS

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this first day in the new chamber, I am very pleased to rise to present two petitions I received from Canadians. The first one calls on the government to listen to Canadians and to abandon its recently implemented job-killing carbon tax.

THYROID DISEASE

Hon. Diane Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second is from Canadians who, like me, suffer from thyroid disease and need to take specific medication to regulate their thyroid. They call on the government to ensure equitable access to all thyroid drugs approved by Health Canada, and for doctors to be educated on various other treatments that exist to help thyroid patients.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a petition in support of Bill S-240, which deals with organ harvesting and trafficking. It has been passed by the Senate and supported unanimously here at second reading. It is now about to be studied at the foreign affairs committee.

● (1530)

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this new and beautiful chamber to present a petition from residents of Canada who point out that feminist women's organizations have been struggling for decades to keep the lights on and doors open due to a lack of federal core operational funding. The petitioners point out that women's organizations are the most underfunded in Canada's non-profit sector, yet are the single most effective means to building better lives for women and that women's organizations need reliable, long-term, stable operational funding and direct investment to help women.

Therefore, these residents call on the Government of Canada to immediately provide secure, multi-year core operational funding to feminist women's organizations and set national standards to ensure equality of access to services and protection for all women.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to table today. The first one is on Bill C-399. I have nearly 100 petitioners from my riding who are writing in and asking the Government of Canada to support my private member's bill, which would help persons with disabilities obtain greater access to the disability tax credit.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am tabling today is on Bill S-240. It is in support of it. It asks that the Government of Canada do more to combat forced organ harvesting and impose inadmissibility to Canada on those who have been involved. The petitioners mention that there are four bills that have been proposed in various parliaments over the last 10 years and that we have to start all over again every time there is a new election.

MORTGAGES

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the final petition is from 39 petitioners from my riding who are asking that the mortgage stress test introduced by the government be completely reviewed and changed. They are saying that it has had a huge impact on people in the riding, as well as on individual petitioners. They are asking for the B20 stress test rules to be reviewed and amended.

Routine Proceedings

PLASTICS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it comes as no surprise that the first petition I am tabling in the House, on behalf of Vancouver Islanders, is calling on the government to immediately create a national strategy to combat plastics in our oceans. My motion was passed in the House unanimously. These petitioners are calling on the government to develop this strategy in time for the budget and in light of the recent announcements in the EU and India to ban single-use plastics. They are calling on the government to implement a strategy, similar to the ones in those countries, immediately.

PHARMACARE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure today that I rise to table yet another petition for the residents of Winnipeg North. It calls upon the Prime Minister, the government and in fact all sides of the House to recognize the value of a national pharmacare program. It asks that we work with stakeholders to ensure that Canadians from coast to coast have a national pharmacare program to deal with prescribed medicines.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise and table a petition on behalf of hundreds of residents in Saskatoon and across Saskatchewan who are calling on the Government of Canada to improve public safety by instituting stiffer penalties for impaired driving offences. Among other things, these concerned citizens want to see a mandatory minimum sentence for impaired driving as well as a redefinition of “impaired driving causing death” to “vehicular manslaughter”. I trust that the government will deal expeditiously with these citizens' concerns.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Madam Speaker, this petition supports Bill S-240. It is hard to believe that there is currently no law in Canada that prohibits going abroad and taking a person's vital organs without consent. This bill would fill that legal gap and needs to be passed right away.

FIREARMS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by Canadians from the ridings of Cloverdale—Langley City, Port Moody—Coquitlam and Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge. They call on the House of Commons to respect the rights of law-abiding firearms owners and to reject the Prime Minister's plan to waste taxpayers' money by setting a ban on guns that are already banned.

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition in support of Bill S-240. Bill S-240 would amend the Criminal Code to create new offences in relation to trafficking in human organs and tissues. It would also amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to provide that permanent residents or foreign nationals would be inadmissible to Canada if the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was of the opinion that they had engaged in any activities relating to trafficking

in human organs or tissues. This bill is currently before the foreign affairs committee.

• (1535)

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table six petitions in the House today.

The first petition deals with the challenges faced by Pakistani asylum seekers who are currently in Thailand. It is a major priority that has been brought to my attention by the community. It notes that the recent crackdown on asylum seekers in Thailand has shaken and deeply affected the Canadian Christian community of Pakistani origin. Pakistani asylum seekers fled their homes with hopes of resettling in countries where they could freely practice their religion without fear of being victimized under blasphemy laws. The petition urges the Government of Canada to take up this matter with the Government of Thailand, and urges the proper protection of Pakistani asylum seekers who are there. It asks that they be provided with refugee status by the UNHCR and support for resettlement.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the second petition deals with the plight of Afghanistan's Sikh and Hindu minorities. It calls on the Minister of Immigration to use the powers granted to him to create a special program to help persecuted minorities in Afghanistan. This is something that has not happened yet, and the community has been calling for it. The petition further urges the Minister of Foreign Affairs to raise the persecution faced by this community with her Afghan counterpart.

FALUN GONG

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the third petition is about the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China and calls on Chinese officials to immediately end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. It calls on Parliament and the government to undertake steps to advocate for those facing this persecution.

FIREARMS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the fourth petition is about Bill C-71. It raises concerns about that bill and supports the right of lawful firearms owners to not face punitive measures from the government.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the fifth petition calls on the government to support the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline to ensure its completion.

Routine Proceedings

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, finally, I am pleased to table a petition in support of Bill S-240, a bill I sponsored that came to us from the Senate. It is currently before the foreign affairs committee. It deals with the scourge of forced organ harvesting. It is important that we pass that bill as soon as possible so that we do not have to start again after the next election.

[Translation]

HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition regarding Bill S-240, which seeks to make it illegal to traffic in human organs and tissue and would give the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship the authority to make permanent residents or foreign nationals inadmissible to Canada if they have engaged in these activities.

[English]

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to table a petition today in support of Bill S-240. The bill would make it illegal to go abroad to obtain organs without the consent of the person donating those organs and would also render someone inadmissible to Canada who participates in that illegal trade of organs.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table a petition in support of Bill S-240, which deals with the horrific practice of organ harvesting. It might surprise members of the House to know that it still happens in many places around the world. The bill would finally deal with that scourge by making it illegal for a Canadian to go abroad and receive an organ without the consent of the patient. The bill is before the foreign affairs committee right now.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I, too, would like to present a petition endorsing Bill S-240. It is currently at the foreign affairs committee. I ask that the committee proceed quickly to get the bill passed. Organ harvesting continues to happen around the world, and we need tools to make sure that it no longer happens.

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I, too, am pleased to table a petition supporting Bill S-240. As has been said, this would make it a criminal offence for Canadians to go abroad to receive an organ without the consent of the patient. I am sure there is not a member of the House who has not met with the members of this group who have told us the horrendous stories. The bill is currently before the foreign affairs committee, and we would ask that it be studied and hopefully passed before this session of the House concludes this spring.

• (1540)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that they are to talk about the petition itself without going into the committee work and the support for the petition.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Questions Nos. 2035, 2037 to 2041, 2044, 2055, 2065, 2070 to 2072, 2075, 2076, 2083, 2085, 2101, 2102, 2105, 2106, 2117 and 2144.

[Text]

Question No. 2035—**Mr. Hunter Tootoo:**

With regard to the financial reviews to which the Nunavut Planning Commission was subjected for the financial years ranging from 2012 to 2017: (a) what are the names and titles of the persons who determined that these reviews were necessary; (b) what was the rationale for determining that the audits were necessary; (c) how much did the KPMG review, which covered the years 2012-13 to 2014-15, cost; (d) how much did the Ernst and Young review, which covered the years 2015-16 and 2016-17, cost; and (e) what were the findings and observations of these reviews?

Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, CIRNAC, and its special operating agency Indian Oil and Gas Canada, IOGC, are concerned, the response is as follows. With regard to part (a), it was Anne Scotton, chief audit and evaluation executive, CIRNAC.

With regard to part (b), the 2018 financial review by Ernst & Young was a follow-up on the previous review of the Nunavut Planning Commission, NPC, completed in August 2016 by KPMG. The purpose of both reviews was to provide an independent and objective opinion on whether CIRNAC funding had been expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of CIRNAC's funding agreement with the NPC for the 2012-13, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 fiscal years, for both core and supplemental funding. Both reviews were conducted to examine compliance with the approved funding agreement and did not examine value for money.

With regard to part (c), for 2015-16, the professional fees were \$82,617.84, and the travel fees were \$8,844.20. For 2016-17, the professional fees were \$18,897.24, and the travel fees were \$2,662.56.

With regard to part (d), for 2017-18, the professional fees were \$48,055.26, and the travel fees were \$12,555.09.

With regard to part (e), a summary of the 2016 financial review of the Nunavut Planning Commission by KPMG and of the 2018 financial review of the Nunavut Planning Commission by Ernst & Young can be found at the following links: for 2016, <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1473944259394/1473944507036>; for 2018, <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1536847791557/1536848025495>.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2037—Mr. Ted Falk:**

With respect to proposals being considered by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada with regard to Internet services in rural areas since November 4, 2015: (a) has the department considered a proposal that would take broadband spectrum used by rural wireless providers and auction it off for 5G wireless to be used mainly in large urban centres; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, (i) is the department pursuing this proposal, (ii) how many Canadian households would be affected by this change, (iii) has the department undertaken an analysis to determine the impact of a decline in Internet services in rural communities, (iv) does the department have a plan to provide alternative spectrum to existing users, (v) has the department engaged in consultations with rural Canadians and other stakeholders about this proposal; (c) if the answer to (b)(iii) is affirmative, what did the analysis determine; (d) if the answer to (b)(iii) is negative, why was no analysis undertaken; (e) if the answer to (b)(v) is affirmative, (i) what were the dates and locations of each consultation, (ii) who was consulted, (iii) what feedback was provided; and (f) if the answer to (b)(v) is negative, why were no consultations undertaken?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, rural Internet is not at risk. The government is delivering on its commitment to connect more and more rural Canadian communities.

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, ISED, is considering how best to prepare for 5G in a way that lets all Canadians, including those in rural and remote communities, benefit from the next generation of wireless technologies. 5G is expected to add \$40 billion to annual GDP by 2026, creating more jobs for Canadians.

As the 3500 MHz band is expected to be one of the first used for 5G services, the government held a public consultation on proposals to facilitate the initial deployment of 5G in Canada. The proposal included options for repurposing some spectrum from existing licensees in both urban and rural areas. All comments received through this consultation process are available online at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/smt-gst.nsf/eng/sf11401.html>.

This process is about maintaining and expanding rural broadband coverage, while establishing conditions where faster and cheaper Internet is more widely available through modern technologies.

Rural Internet is a priority for the government. This is demonstrated by investments totalling \$500 million in connectivity for rural communities. The connect to innovate program is bringing new or improved high-speed access to more than 900 rural and remote communities, because all Canadians deserve equal opportunities in the digital economy, regardless of their postal code.

Question No. 2038—Ms. Michelle Rempel:

With regard to Member of Parliament inquiries to the Immigration and Refugee Board on behalf of constituents: (a) what is the average time it takes to respond in full to an inquiry, broken down by year from 2015 to 2018; and (b) how many staff are currently assigned to answer Member of Parliament inquiries?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, IRB, is concerned, with regard to (a), the IRB aims to respond to inquiries by members of Parliament, or MPs, and their constituency staff within two weeks of receipt. The IRB does not keep track of processing times for each inquiry by calendar year.

As of December 10, 2018, there are no inquiries that remain to be addressed, which is well within the working inventory of 20 requests at any given time.

With regard to (b), one half of a full-time equivalent employee, FTE, is assigned to MP inquiries.

Question No. 2039—Ms. Michelle Rempel:

With regard to Pakistani refugees in Thailand with currently pending private sponsorship applications before Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada: (a) how many cases are currently awaiting resettlement to Canada; (b) what is the current wait time for privately sponsored Pakistani refugees in Thailand to be resettled; and (c) when does the government anticipate reducing the wait time to 12 months, as was promised?

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insofar as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, IRCC, is concerned, with regard to (a), as of November 26, 2018, in the inventory there are a total of 160 privately sponsored refugee applications, which excludes cancelled and prospective applications, representing 450 persons of Pakistani origin—principal applicant based on country of citizenship—residing in Thailand.

With regard to (b), processing of privately sponsored refugees is influenced by numerous factors, including the security situation of the area in which the refugee is located, exit clearance processing, and difficulty reaching refugees in remote areas. Wait times are further influenced by individual office capacity and intake management.

Processing times are posted by the migration or visa office and are not broken down by specific nationalities or populations. While IRCC cannot provide specific timing for processing of privately sponsored Pakistani refugees from Thailand, the current processing time for the majority of privately sponsored refugees applying from Thailand is 25 months. The processing time indicates how long it has taken to process most complete applications in the past 12 months.

IRCC is closely monitoring the situation in Thailand regarding the government restrictions on all irregular migrants. IRCC is actively making efforts to expedite the processing of recognized refugees in Canada's resettlement process who are at imminent risk of refoulement.

With regard to (c), due to the generosity of Canadians, IRCC has seen an increase in demand for the private sponsorship of refugees. The continued high level of interest from private sponsors is a reflection of the success of the program. At the same time, IRCC must manage the intake of applications in order to be able to process them in a timely way based on the immigration levels plan.

IRCC is working to achieve our goal of reducing wait times to an average of 12 months. These changes will ensure the long-term success of the program, which is, and will remain, an integral part of Canada's immigration program.

Routine Proceedings

The government has more than tripled the number of spaces available in the privately sponsored refugee program over pre-2015 levels, to allow even more Canadians to sponsor refugees to Canada and to reduce wait times.

IRCC is continuing to discuss options for a way forward with sponsors and remains committed to reducing the privately sponsored refugee inventory in a way that is fair for sponsors and refugees alike.

Question No. 2040—**Ms. Hélène Laverdière:**

With respect to the Supplementary Estimates (A) 2018-2019 and the voted appropriations for the Funding for the 2018 G7 Summit in Charlevoix: what are the details of Vote 1a estimated at \$10,698,215, broken down by (i) operating expenses for transport, (ii) operating expenses for furniture rental, (iii) operating expenses for equipment, (iv) operating expenses for photography, (v) operating expenses for broadcasting, (vi) operating expenses for communications?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, Canada was proud to hold the G7 presidency from January 1 to December 31, 2018, and used this important opportunity to speak with a strong voice on the international stage on issues that matter to Canadians, as well as to engage G7 counterparts on global challenges. The themes chosen by Canada focused discussions on finding concrete solutions to the challenge we all face: how to create growth that benefits everyone, including the middle class and those working hard to join it. Canada's presidency resulted in the G7 community making important progress on the goals of ensuring that all citizens benefit from our global economy, and that we leave a healthier and more secure world for our children.

The \$10,698,215 in supplementary estimates (A) for 2018-19 was not requested for the specific line items as listed above.

The amount of \$10,698,215 is a reprofiling request to transfer unused G7 summit funding from the 2017-18 fiscal year to 2018-19. As such, this amount was not a request for new funding.

Question No. 2041—**Mr. Pierre Poilievre:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): (a) what is the amount of tax collected and assessed by the CRA because of the deemed disposition of assets that is triggered pursuant to paragraph 128.1(4)(b) of the Income Tax Act as a result of an individual becoming a non-resident of Canada, broken down by taxation years (i) 2015, (ii) 2016, (iii) 2017; and (b) what is the amount of gains and losses reported to the CRA by individuals on prescribed forms T1161 and T1243, broken down by taxation years (i) 2015, (ii) 2016, (iii) 2017?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the information provided on forms T1161 and T1243 by taxpayers is not captured on CRA databases for reporting purposes, and cannot be used to produce aggregate data in the manner requested.

Question No. 2044—**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:**

With respect to the Paradise Papers affair, the fight against offshore tax non-compliance and aggressive tax planning: (a) how many taxpayers' or Canadian companies' files are currently open at the Canada Revenue Agency; (b) how many taxpayers' or Canadian companies' files have been sent to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada; (c) how many taxpayers' or Canadian companies' files are linked to the marijuana industry; (d) how many employees are assigned to Paradise Papers files; (e) how many audits have been performed since the release of the Paradise Papers; and (f) how much has the Canada Revenue Agency recovered in total?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the CRA has obtained

and is actively reviewing all the information contained in the paradise papers that was released publicly by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, ICIJ, to determine whether an audit had already occurred or whether an audit should be undertaken.

The CRA has identified over 3,000 individuals or corporations with links to the paradise papers. Please note this figure includes those non-residents or taxpayers identified by the CRA prior to the release of information by the ICIJ, who may have been engaged in tax avoidance transactions.

With regard to part (b), to date, no Canadian taxpayer or company has been referred to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada for criminal prosecution as a result of information received from the paradise paper affair.

With regard to part (c), the CRA does not have this information.

With regard to part (d), more than 25 CRA employees have been assigned specific work relating to the paradise papers, including research, data analytics, risk assessments, audits and coordinating efforts with the agency's international partners.

With regard to part (e), to date, approximately 100 taxpayers with links to the paradise papers have been identified for audit.

Through its international agreements, the CRA continues to obtain the required source documents from other tax administrations. Audits and criminal investigations such as those linked to the paradise papers are complex and, due to those complexities, can require months or years to complete.

With regard to part (f), as of the date of this question, the CRA has not made any reassessments for audits related to the paradise papers, including those audits that had begun prior to the receipt of the information from the release of information by the ICIJ.

The CRA has reported on collection related to offshore compliance projects in the past, several years after the projects were completed to allow time period for the objection rights of taxpayers. The CRA will do so for the paradise papers. The CRA will report on these figures publicly once they are compiled.

Also, the CRA decided to restrict access to the voluntary disclosure program, if the CRA has already received information on a taxpayer's, or a related taxpayer's, potential involvement in tax non-compliance—for example, a leak of offshore financial information such as the paradise papers. This choice will extend the time to finalize the CRA's work, but will deliver stronger consequences to those involved in offshore non-compliance schemes.

Question No. 2055—**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:**

With regard to the \$477 million provided to the Canada Infrastructure Bank in the 2018-19 Supplementary Estimates (A): what is the itemized breakdown of how the \$477 million is projected to be utilized?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, supplementary estimates (A) listed a transfer from the Department of Finance to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, CIB, in the amount of \$477,284,533 for the 2018-19 fiscal year. This amount represents \$450,000,000 for capital appropriations and \$27,284,533 for operating appropriations for CIB's 2018-19 approved budgets.

The CIB announced that the investment in the Réseau Express Métropolitain, REM, light rail project in Montréal will come from capital appropriations.

The operating appropriations are allocated to administration activities, such as human resources, premises and equipment, information technology and professional fees and services, including finance, legal, accounting, external audit and consultants and advisers for the REM investment.

As it is legislatively appropriated, the CIB's appropriations are held in the consolidated revenue fund, and the CIB will request a drawdown from the Department of Finance up to the amount required, as required for its operating and capital needs and based on approved budgets in its corporate plan.

Question No. 2065—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to funding for legal assistance provided to government employees, broken down by department or agency, and by year since 2016: (a) how many employees received legal assistance funding; (b) how many employees requested or applied for legal assistance funding in relation to a matter arising from their actions as a government employee; (c) of the individuals in (b) how many were (i) approved for funding, (ii) denied funding; and (d) what was the (i) average amount spent per individual who received legal funding, (ii) total expenditure on legal assistance?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, in processing parliamentary returns, the government applies the Privacy Act and the principles set out in the Access to Information Act. A response to the question could disclose personal and solicitor privileged information.

Question No. 2070—Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy:

With regard to construction delays for the new Champlain Bridge and the new negotiations between the Signature on the Saint Lawrence Group and Infrastructure Canada: (a) how much is the fine for every day of delay; (b) what is the maximum fine amount; (c) what caused the delays that were beyond the control of the Signature on the Saint Lawrence Group, broken down by type; (d) on what date will the fines come into effect; (e) will the financial penalty system outlined in the contract signed in 2015 be maintained; and (f) what is the estimated final financial cost incurred due to the construction delays?

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, with regard to construction delays of the new Champlain Bridge and the new negotiations between the Signature on the Saint Lawrence Group and Infrastructure Canada, and (a) in particular, the liquidated damages related to the bridge opening are of \$100,000 per day for the first seven days of delays and of \$400,000 per day, minus interest on the senior debt, afterward.

With regard to (b), the maximum amount of liquidated damages that can be charged for delays to the bridge opening is \$150 million.

With regard to (c), the various causes of the delays and impacts of each cause are part of ongoing confidential commercial discussions. However, part of the delays is due to the crane operators strike.

With regard to (d), as per the contract, liquidated damages only start if the private partner is late in opening the bridge to traffic and subsequently late in delivering the whole corridor. The contractual dates are December 21, 2018, and October 31, 2019, but are subject to change if there are events out of the private partner's control, such as strikes.

With regard to (e), it is Canada's intention to apply the contract.

With regard to (f), the costs, if any, and the responsibility for these costs are part of ongoing confidential commercial discussions.

Question No. 2071—Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy:

With regard to the Supplementary Estimates (A), 2018-19, and Votes 1a and 5a for the Funding for the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project: (a) what is the detailed justification for the difference between the payment to Signature on the Saint Lawrence provided by the settlement agreement dated April 13, 2018, of \$235 million and the amount in Vote 5a of \$257,522,708; (b) what will be the total amount paid to Signature on the Saint Lawrence under the settlement agreement between the government and Signature on the Saint Lawrence; and (c) what are the details of the funding requirement for Vote 1a of \$34,234,247?

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), there were two items in the Supplementary Estimates (A) that were approved for the new Champlain Bridge corridor project, the NCBC project. The first was for \$235 million, which is for approval to amend an existing contract authority and to fund acceleration measures and a negotiated settlement pertaining to the new Champlain Bridge corridor project, as per budget 2014. The second was for \$22.5 million, which is part of the \$56 million lapsed funding from fiscal year 2017-18 that was reprofiled into 2018-19 through Supplementary Estimates (A). Of this, \$15.2 million will be used to settle expropriation claims for one property belonging to Nuntip and 31 properties from the City of Montreal. The remaining funding will be used to finance postponed work as it related to flagmen as part of the CN agreement, for \$3 million, and various environmental compensation projects, for \$4.3 million. The total is \$257.5 million.

With regard to (b), a maximum of \$235 million will be paid to Signature on the Saint-Lawrence under the settlement agreement.

With regard to (c), the amount of \$33.2 million represents funding for future project operating requirements. Reprofiling this amount will ensure that funds remain available to address project needs. The remaining balance of \$1 million will cover costs associated with the lease of properties from PWGSC to complete delayed environmental compensation projects. The total is \$34.2 million.

Question No. 2072—Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy:

With regard to the lawsuit filed with the Superior Court of Québec by Signature on the Saint Lawrence against Infrastructure Canada in March 2017: what were the government's total legal expenses in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the lawsuit filed with the Superior Court of Québec by Signature on the Saint Lawrence against Infrastructure Canada in March 2017, the government's total legal expenses incurred were \$75,561.09 in 2017 and \$1,419.54 in 2018, taking into consideration the fact that the parties consented to a stay of the legal proceedings in order to allow them to use the contractual dispute resolution mechanism.

Question No. 2075—Mr. Alistair MacGregor:

With respect to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food's trip to China in November 2018: (a) who were all the participants on the trip, broken down by (i) the Minister's staff, (ii) Members of Parliament (iii) Senators, (iv) departmental employees, (v) other invitees; (b) for each participant identified in (a), what was the cost of the trip, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) accommodations, (iii) travel, (iv) meals, (v) all other expenses; (c) what are the details for all events and hospitality organized during the trip, including (i) dates, (ii) city, (iii) number of participants, (iv) total cost; and (d) what agreements or arrangements were signed?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) through (c), this information will be made available on proactive disclosure through the website <https://open.canada.ca/en/search/travel>.

With regard to (d), the government is committed to expanding trade opportunities with China for our agriculture, agri-food and seafood sectors, which will help create good middle-class jobs and more opportunities for Canadians and help increase agricultural exports to \$75 billion by 2025. While in China, Canada signed 18 agriculture and agri-food deals with Chinese companies worth over \$353.3 million. They are described here. The Canadian organization Natural Burg Group signed an agreement with Chinese organization Shaanxi Investment Group / Huashan Venture Technology Development Co., Ltd. The Canadian firm Canada Grand Enterprises Inc. signed an agreement with Chinese organization Zhejiang International E-commerce Service Co., Ltd. The Canadian government and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada signed a memorandum of understanding with Chinese organization Shanghai Hema Network Technology Co. Ltd. The Canadian firm All Impact Foods Inc. signed an agreement with Chinese organization Wuhan Jinyu Free Trade Development Co., Ltd. The Canadian firm CAC Natural foods Inc. signed an agreement with Chinese organization China Certification & Inspection Group, or CCIC. The Canadian firm Sun Wah Foods Ltd. signed an agreement with Chinese organization China Certification & Inspection Group, or CCIC. The Canadian organization Avalon Dairy Limited signed an agreement with Chinese organization China Certification & Inspection Group, or CCIC. The Canadian organization Avalon Dairy Limited signed an agreement with Chinese organization Dandong Chengxie Trade Co., Ltd. The Canadian organization Atlantic Canada Business Network signed a memorandum of understanding with Greenland Zhongxuan (Shanghai) International Trade Co. Ltd. The Canadian organization Red Rover signed a memorandum of understanding with Chinese organization Greenland Zhongxuan (Shanghai) International Trade Co. Ltd. The Canadian organization Cavendish Farms signed an agreement with Chinese organization COFCO Premier. The Canadian firm Richardson International Limited signed a letter of intent with Chinese organization China SDIC International Trade Co., Ltd. The Canadian firm CAC Natural foods Inc. signed a memorandum of understanding with Chinese organization Green-

land Zhongxuan (Shanghai) International Trade Co. Ltd. The Canadian firm Natunola Health Inc. signed an agreement with Chinese organization Shanghai Liangyou Group Company Limited. The Canadian organization Canadian Beef International Institute signed an agreement with Chinese organization Shanghai HaiBo Investment Co., Ltd. / Million Group. The Canadian firm Maple Horizons Ltd. signed a memorandum of understanding with Chinese organization Greenland Zhongxuan (Shanghai) International Trade Co. Ltd. The Canadian firm Maple Horizons Ltd. signed a letter of intent with Chinese organization Anhui Imported Foods Industrial Park.

Question No. 2076—Ms. Michelle Rempel:

With regard to government advertising during the 106th Grey Cup broadcast on November 25, 2018: (a) what is the total amount spent on advertising during the broadcast, including the pre-game and post-game shows; (b) of the amount in (a), how much was spent on (i) ads promoting the Trans Mountain Pipeline, (ii) other ads, broken down by campaign; and (c) what is the breakdown of the amounts in (a) and (b) by station?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, PSPC is responding on behalf of the Government of Canada specifically for those institutions under Schedules I, I.1 and II of the Financial Administration Act.

With regard to (a), the government spent \$92,678 during the broadcast. No government advertisements aired during the pre-game or post-game shows. Members should please note that this amount is a planned expenditure; the actual amount is not yet available as final invoices have not been received.

With regard to (b), none of the amount spent on advertising by the government was spent on ads promoting the Trans Mountain pipeline. The government advertising campaigns featured were Health Canada ads on opioids and vaccination, and National Defence ads on the 100-plus careers campaign.

With regard to (c), in total, five advertisements ran on TSN and RDS. With regard to the breakdown of the amount spent per campaign and per station, the Government of Canada does not disclose information about the specific amounts paid for individual ad placements or the amounts paid to specific media outlets with which we have negotiated rates. This information is considered commercially sensitive third party information and is protected under the Access to Information Act.

Question No. 2083—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the CBC report in November 2018 showing that the privacy of at least 10,000 Canadians was compromised by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) employees "snooping" on their information and accessing taxpayers private financial data without authorization: (a) how many Canadians were affected by CRA employees accessing data without authorization since November 4, 2015; (b) of the Canadians in (a) whose data was compromised by CRA employees, as of today, how many have received notification from the government that their data was compromised; (c) for each instance in (a), but where Canadians were not notified that their data was compromised, for what reason were they not notified; (d) how many CRA employees accessed data without authorization since November 4, 2015; and (e) of the CRA employees in (d), how many were disciplined, broken down by type of disciplinary actions (reprimand, termination, etc.)?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, members should note that the CRA has over 40,000 employees working across Canada. Employee behaviour and expectations are guided by the CRA code of integrity and professional conduct, “the code”, and the values and ethics code for the public sector. The consequences of misconduct are set out in the CRA directive on discipline, “the directive”.

Please note that the code contains specific references to the privacy and confidentiality of taxpayer information and refers to CRA’s detection and prevention of unauthorized access or unauthorized disclosure of taxpayer information.

With regard to the failure to protect information, the code notes that the legal obligation to safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of taxpayer information flows from the Income Tax Act; the Excise Tax Act; the Excise Act, 2001; the Privacy Act; and the Access to Information Act.

The code references the protection of CRA proprietary and taxpayer information. Employees are informed that they must never access any information that is not part of their officially assigned workload, including their own information; disclose any CRA information that has not been made public without official authorization; serve, or deal with the file of, friends, acquaintances, family members, business associates, current or former colleagues, or current or former superiors unless prior approval has been obtained from their manager; or use any CRA information that is not publicly available for any personal use or gain, or for the use or gain of any other person or entity. If the security of CRA or taxpayer information is compromised, the code requires that it must be reported immediately.

With regard to (a), between November 4, 2015, and November 27, 2018—that is, the date of the question—the CRA had 264 confirmed privacy breaches as a result of unauthorized access to taxpayer accounts by CRA employees. A total of 41,361 Canadians were affected by these incidents.

With regard to (b) and (c), in every case in which a CRA investigation determines that an employee has made unauthorized access to taxpayer accounts, the CRA uses Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada guidelines, found at <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=26154> to assess the risk of injury to each affected individual and notifies them accordingly. Notification is done predominantly by letter, which includes information about the taxpayer’s right of complaint to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

To date, the CRA has notified 1,640 of the affected individuals that unauthorized accesses have been made to their accounts. An additional 34 notifications are in progress and the notification letters to the affected individuals are currently being prepared.

For 37,502 individuals for whom the risk of injury was assessed as low, the individuals were not notified. Information was viewed as part of various ALPHA T searches, but accounts were not directly accessed. An ALPHA T search is used to search for an individual using various search criteria (name, address, postal code, etc.), when the SIN is not available.

For a number of other reasons, 2,185 individuals were not notified. These reasons included the individual being deceased with no authorized representative on file, there being no valid address on file, or the risk of injury to the individual being assessed as low.

With regard to (d), 264 CRA employees accessed data without authorization between November 4, 2015, and November 27, 2018—that is, the date of the question.

With regard to (e), the applicable steps and consequences of misconduct are covered under the code and the directive. Consequences of misconduct are based on the severity of the incident and its impact on trust both inside and outside the CRA. Misconduct may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including termination of employment. Of the 264 CRA employees who accessed data without authorization since November 4, 2015, 182 were disciplined; 46 left the CRA; and 36 are pending a decision.

The CRA is limited in its ability to respond in the manner requested. Pursuant to section 8 of the Privacy Act, disciplinary action is considered personal information and is protected from disclosure. Furthermore, when the number of employees is so small that an employee could be directly or indirectly identified, aggregate data cannot be released.

Question No. 2085—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to the weather vane which was removed from atop the Confederation Building: (a) when will the weather vane be reinstalled; (b) who is the artist who created it; and (c) who is restoring it?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), there is currently work being conducted on the exterior of the Confederation Building to preserve the building and ensure ongoing operations until the building undergoes a complete rehabilitation. To protect the integrity of the weather vane during this construction, it was removed and is being stored in a Crown-owned facility while the Confederation Building undergoes its restoration.

With regard to (b), a condition assessment of the weather vane conducted in March 2008 by John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd., indicates that the weather vane is believed to have been designed by Mr. Thomas Dunlop Rankin, the architect who supervised the original construction of the building.

With regard to (c), the weather vane was restored between 2011 and 2012 by Dominion Sculpture, Philip White, and his employee at the time, Ken Adams. Mr. White restored the copper work, while Mr. Adams restored the ironwork.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2101—Mr. Steven Blaney:**

With regard to the mystery illness which has struck diplomats and their families in Cuba: (a) what is the total number of (i) federal employees, (ii) family members of employees, who have suffered from the illness; (b) what are the ranges of symptoms of which the government is aware; (c) what are the details of any compensation or accommodation that the government provided to employees and their families who suffered from the illness; and (d) does the government consider the Cuban government to be responsible for the mystery illness and, if so, what punitive measures, if any, has it taken against the regime in retaliation?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, the safety and security of Canada's diplomats and their families is a top priority for Global Affairs Canada.

The government remains deeply troubled by the health problems experienced by some Canadian diplomats and their families who were posted to Cuba. There are currently 13 confirmed cases of affected Canadians. The reported range and severity of symptoms among these Canadians vary.

All those affected by these health problems have our unwavering support. The Government of Canada will continue to do all we can to provide advice and support to them under these difficult circumstances.

The government is investigating any and all possible causes, and we will continue to take measures necessary to protect our diplomats and their families.

Canada has an evidence-based approach to addressing this situation, and our response is guided by the advice of medical experts and treating physicians.

At the current time, the cause of these health problems remains unknown. The investigation into these issues continues.

Question No. 2102—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to Phase 3 of the competitiveness analysis of the output-based pricing system: (a) what were the findings of the analysis; (b) what is the website location where the public can access the findings; and (c) on what date was the analysis completed?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the federal carbon pollution pricing system has two parts: a regulatory charge on fuel, or federal fuel charge, and a regulatory trading system for large industry—the output-based pricing system. The output-based pricing system is designed to ensure there is a price incentive for companies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining competitiveness and protecting against carbon leakage. Instead of paying the charge on fuels that they purchase, facilities in the output-based pricing system will be subject to the carbon pollution price on a portion of their emissions. The portion of emissions will be determined based on a facility's production and relevant output-based standards, expressed in emissions intensity—i.e., emissions per unit of output.

In July 2018, the government proposed that the starting point for all output-based standards be set at 80% of national sector average emissions intensity and that consideration be given to revising this level based on a three-phased approach to assessing competitiveness and carbon leakage risk to sectors from carbon pollution pricing.

Phase 1 and 2 analysis is quantitative analysis of the level of emission intensity and trade exposure of industrial sectors. The

analysis is similar to that used in other jurisdictions to assess the risks posed by carbon pricing to competitiveness and carbon leakage for industrial sector.

Phase 3 analysis focuses on the ability to pass through costs from carbon pollution pricing; domestic or international market considerations that could heighten competitiveness risks due to carbon pollution pricing; consideration of indirect costs from transportation and electricity; and other specific considerations related to carbon pollution pricing that could affect the sector as a whole, a particular region within that sector, or individual facilities.

To support phase 3, stakeholders were invited to submit additional information and analyses relevant to competitiveness impacts of carbon pollution pricing. Environment and Climate Change Canada officials engaged with stakeholders through in-person meetings and conference calls and reviewed submissions from stakeholders. Analysis was conducted based on publicly available data as well as stakeholder submissions that provided sector and facility-level data and information.

To date, the government has identified five sectors as being at higher competitiveness and carbon leakage risk due to carbon pollution pricing and output-based standards. They are: cement, iron and steel manufacturing, lime, petrochemicals and nitrogen fertilizers. Proposed output-based standards for these sectors are set at 90% of sector average emissions intensity for iron and steel manufacturing, petrochemicals and nitrogen fertilizers, and 95% for cement and lime. Draft regulations for the output-based pricing system, including output-based standards that will reflect the outcomes of the three-phase analysis, were released for public comment on December 20, 2018 and are available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/pricing-pollution-how-it-will-work/output-based-pricing-system/proposal-regulations.html>. Final regulations and final output-based standards are targeted for mid-2019.

Question No. 2105—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to the skating rink installed on Parliament Hill as part of the Canada 150 events: (a) what was the final total of all costs associated with the rink, including any resulting repairs required to the lawn on Parliament Hill; and (b) what is the detailed breakdown of all related costs?

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) and (b), the final costs of the skating rink on Parliament Hill, including costs associated with the repairs to the lawn, will be available upon receipt of financial reports from the Ottawa International Hockey Festival, the OIHF, in June 2019.

Question No. 2106—Mr. Larry Miller:

With regard to government involvement and funding for Digital Democracy Project at the Public Policy Forum: (a) on what date did the government provide funding for the project; (b) how much money did the government provide for the project; (c) what is the detailed description of this federally funded project; (d) what specific assurances did the government receive, if any, to ensure that this project is not biased towards the Liberal Party of Canada; and (e) will this project expose and examine "fake news", propaganda, and non-answers given or perpetuated by the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers?

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as of December 3, 2018, the Department of Canadian Heritage has not provided funding for the digital democracy project at the public policy forum.

Question No. 2117—**Ms. Rachael Harder:**

With regard to the government's policy to allow oil imports from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia: has a Gender-based Analysis been conducted on the importation of oil from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia and, if so, what were the findings of the analysis?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada has been committed to conducting GBA+ analysis on legislation, policies and programs since 1995. GBA+ plays an important role in the government's domestic regulatory, program and policy development. Decisions on where to import crude oil from are private sector commercial decisions. As such, federal GBA+ analyses are not conducted on crude oil imports; however, many companies do conduct their own gender-based analyses.

Question No. 2144—**Mr. Kevin Sorenson:**

With regard to the \$177,718.18 spent by Environment and Climate Change Canada on Non-public servant travel – Key Stakeholders (object code 0262) during the 2017-18 fiscal year: (a) what are the names of the "key stakeholders" who received funds under this expenditure; (b) how much did each "key stakeholder" receive; and (c) what was the destination and purpose of each trip related to each expenditure?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Environment and Climate Change Canada does not have specific coding to track information related to Question Q-2144.

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[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the government's response to Questions Nos. 2030 to 2034, 2036, 2042, 2043, 2045 to 2054, 2056 to 2064, 2066 to 2069, 2073, 2074, 2077, 2082, 2084, 2086 to 2100, 2103, 2104, 2107 to 2114, 2116, 2118 to 2143 and 2145 to 2148 be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker: (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 2030—**Ms. Elizabeth May:**

With respect to the Trans Mountain pipeline purchased by the government on August 31, 2018: (a) did the Minister of Natural Resources seek a cost-benefit analysis of acquiring the existing pipeline and of building an expansion; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, (i) when was the analysis sought, (ii) when was the finalized analysis received, (iii) in what format was the finalized analysis received, for instance as a briefing note, a memo, a report, etc.; and (c) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the details of the analysis, including (i) name and credentials of the author or authors, (ii) date of publication, (iii) the WTI/WCS differential used in the calculations, (iv) the range in years from which data on Canada's oil industry was captured and analyzed for the study, (v) the impact of an expanded pipeline on jobs in the Parkland refinery, (vi) the estimated number of construction jobs and of permanent jobs created by the expansion project, (vii) the projected construction

costs of the pipeline expansion project, (viii) an assessment of the impacts of a tanker spill or pipeline leak on British Columbia's tourism and fisheries industries, (ix) the government's liability in the event of a spill or leak, broken down by recovery costs for marine, alluvial, and land-based ecologies (including but not limited to remediation, rehabilitation and restoration of sites and species, especially endangered species) and financial compensation for loss of livelihood and involuntary resettlement of human populations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2031—**Mr. Matt Jeneroux:**

With regard to infrastructure projects which were approved for funding by Infrastructure Canada since November 4, 2015: what are the details of all such projects, including (i) location, (ii) project title and description, (iii) amount of federal funding commitment, (iv) amount of federal funding delivered to date, (v) amount of provincial funding commitment, (vi) amount of local funding commitment, including name of municipality or local government, (vii) status of project, (viii) start date, (ix) completion date, or expected completion date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2032—**Mr. Guy Lauzon:**

With regard to cyberattacks on government departments and agencies since January 1, 2016, broken down by year: (a) how many attempted cyberattacks on government websites or servers were successfully blocked; (b) how many cyberattacks on government websites or servers were not successfully blocked; and (c) for each cyberattack in (b), what are the details, including (i) date, (ii) departments or agencies targeted, (iii) summary of incident, (iv) whether or not police were informed or charges were laid?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2033—**Mr. Richard Cannings:**

With regard to the Elementary and Secondary Education Program offered by Indigenous Services Canada, broken down by province and territory: (a) how much funding was budgeted for the program for each fiscal year since 2014-15 to date; and (b) how much has been spent on the program for each fiscal year since 2014-15 to date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2034—**Mr. Richard Cannings:**

With regard to communication between the Office of the Prime Minister or the Office of the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and persons employed by or on the board of directors of Waterfront Toronto: what are all instances of communication from November 5, 2015, to date, broken down by (i) date, (ii) person in the Office of the Prime Minister or of the Minister, (iii) subject matter, (iv) persons with whom communication occurred and their titles, (v) method of communication?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2036—**Mr. Harold Albrecht:**

With regard to the Canada Child Benefit: (a) how many recipients of the benefit (i) are permanent residents of Canada, (ii) are temporary residents of Canada, (iii) have received refugee status, (iv) have made asylum claims that have not yet been adjudicated; (b) what is the total amount of money that has been paid out to the recipients in (a)(iii); and (c) what is the total amount of money that has been paid out to the recipients in (a)(iv)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2042—**Ms. Michelle Rempel:**

With respect to border crossings occurring at unofficial Canadian ports of entry between January 1, 2017, and October 30, 2018: (a) how many border crossers have had family members later present themselves at an official point of entry to claim asylum using the exemption in the Safe Third Country Agreement for family members; and (b) how many of the cases described in (a) are currently at the Immigration and Refugee Board?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2043—Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:**

With regard to applications for cannabis licences approved by Health Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency under the Cannabis Act and the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations: (a) how many licensed producers are structured within family trusts; (b) how many licensed producers have a criminal history; (c) what measures were taken to ensure there was no criminal history; (d) were the criminal histories of the parent companies of licensed producers analyzed; (e) how many licensed producers are associated with individuals with a criminal history; (f) how many parent companies of licensed producers are directly or indirectly associated with individuals and businesses with a criminal history; (g) how many licensed producers were reported by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; (h) are the parent companies of licensed producers required to obtain a security clearance, and if so, how many parent companies of licensed producers are there; (i) what are the sources of financing of licensed producers, broken down by jurisdiction; (j) what is the detailed ownership structure of each licensed producer; and (k) what specific measures did Health Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency take to identify the true beneficiaries of licensed producers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2045—Mr. François Choquette:

With respect to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages: (a) to which branch of the government does the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages belong, according to the Official Languages Act; (b) before the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages, had the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages ever covered the expenses of the appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages; (c) if the answer to (b) is negative, why did the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages agree to pay the expenses for the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages; (d) who precisely approached the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages to have it sign and pay for a contract with Boyden for the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages; (e) has Parliament ever authorized the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages to pay for expenses incurred by the government; (f) if the answer to (e) is affirmative, what are the authorizations in question; (g) did Parliament have access to the services from Boyden for which the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages paid in relation to the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages; (h) if the answer to (g) is negative, why; (i) how, in detail, did the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages ensure that the money that it spent for the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages was used for the appropriate purposes; (j) does the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages have all the details of how the money that it paid for the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages was spent; (k) has the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages ever authorized Boyden to subcontract services; and (l) what was the total amount that the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages was prepared to pay to cover expenses related to the most recent appointment process for the Commissioner of Official Languages?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2046—Mr. Harold Albrecht:

With regard to the Correctional Service of Canada's Prison Needle Exchange Program: (a) what consultations were done with the Union of Canadian Correctional Officers prior to the pilot program launching; (b) on what dates did the consultations in (a) take place; (c) who was in attendance for the consultations in (a); (d) how many inmates are registered for the program; (e) how many needles have been given to inmates in the program; (f) what are the index offences of inmates registered for the program; (g) what plans, if any, exist to begin the program at other penitentiaries; (h) is an inmate's participation in the program noted in their correctional plan; (i) is an inmate's participation in the program disclosed to the Parole Board of Canada; (j) what safety measures, if any, have been put in place to protect correctional officers from needles that are now in circulation; (k) how many cases have been found of inmates not in the program being in possession of needles sourced to the program; (l) how many needles have been returned to administrators of the program; (m) how many needles have gone missing as a result of inmates losing or not returning them; (n) where does the government suspect that the remaining or missing needles are located; (o) how many inmates have been subject to disciplinary measures for either failing to return a prison exchange needle or being in violation of the program's regulations; and (p) what is the rate of inmate assaults on correctional officers since the program began?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2047—Mr. Harold Albrecht:

With regard to infrastructure projects approved for funding by Infrastructure Canada since November 4, 2015, in the Waterloo region (defined as the ridings of Kitchener—Conestoga, Kitchener South—Hespeler, Kitchener Center, Waterloo, and Cambridge): what are the details of all such projects, including (i) location, (ii) project title and description, (iii) amount of federal funding commitment, (iv) amount of federal funding delivered to date, (v) amount of provincial funding commitment, (vi) amount of local funding commitment, including name of municipality or local government, (vii) status of project, (viii) start date, (ix) completion date or expected completion date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2048—Mrs. Alice Wong:

With regard to funding allocated in the Main Estimates 2018-19 under the Department of Employment and Social Development: (a) what are the details of funding for programs targeted at seniors, including (i) amount of funding allocated per program, (ii) name of program, (iii) summary of program; and (b) what are the details of all organizations which received funding to date through the allocations referenced in (a), including (i) name of organization, (ii) start and end date of funding, (iii) amount, (iv) description of programs or services for which funding is intended, (v) location (i.e. riding name)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2049—Ms. Tracey Ramsey:

With regard to federal spending in the riding of Essex, for each fiscal year since 2015-16, inclusively: what are the details of all grants, contributions and loans to every organization, group, business or municipality, broken down by (i) name of the recipient, (ii) municipality of the recipient, (iii) date on which the funding was received, (iv) amount received, (v) department or agency that provided the funding, (vi) program under which the grant, contribution or loan was made, (vii) nature or purpose of the funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2050—Ms. Tracey Ramsey:

With respect to the federal agency Invest in Canada and its board of directors: (a) what is, to date, the total amount of expenses of the Chair of the board and the members of the board, broken down by type of expenditure; (b) what are the details of implementing a national strategy to attract foreign direct investment to Canada; (c) how many new partnerships have been created, to date, with the departments or agencies of any government in Canada, the private sector in Canada, or other Canadian stakeholders interested in foreign direct investment; (d) how many activities, events, conferences and programs to promote Canada as a destination for investors have so far been created; (e) how much information has so far been collected, prepared and disseminated to assist foreign investors in supporting their foreign direct investment decisions in Canada; (f) how many services have been provided to foreign investors, to date, in respect of their current or potential investments in Canada; (g) who are the foreign investors that the agency has met, to date; (h) what are the suppliers outside of the federal public administration which the agency has used to date; (i) what, to date, are the providers of legal services outside the federal public administration on which the agency has relied; and (j) what are the filters and anti-conflict-of-interest requirements to which the members of the board are subject?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2051—Ms. Tracey Ramsey:**

With respect to the appointment process of the Chair and the members of the board of directors of the federal agency Invest in Canada: (a) did the President and any other member of the board disclose to the Deputy Minister any advice that, if adopted and executed by Invest in Canada, would provide them with a personal or professional financial gain, or bring one to a member of their immediate families or to any organization to which they are affiliated; (b) are the Chair or any other member of the board authorized to disclose to the members of other boards of directors (i) documentation, (ii) deliberations, (iii) records, (iv) advice obtained, (v) updates, (vi) commission data; (c) did the President or any other member of the board report an apparent conflict of interest; (d) did the Chair and any other member of the board object to a discussion or formulation of a recommendation that would conflict with their other interests; and (e) to what regulations, laws or policies relating to conflicts of interest and ethics are the President and any other member of the board subject?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2052—Ms. Karine Trudel:

With regard to problematic issues related to the Phoenix pay system and the implementation of mixed pay teams in the 13 departments in June 2018: (a) what is the evolution of the cumulative backlog, broken down by department; (b) how many people were underpaid by the Phoenix pay system, in total and broken down by department; (c) how many employees experienced a total pay disruption, broken down by department; (d) of those employees in (c), broken down by department and sex, (i) how many did not receive any pay, (ii) how many had other errors related to pay; (e) what is the average error processing time, broken down by individual complaint; and (f) how many hours of overtime were required to address these issues, broken down by hours of work and costs incurred per pay period?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2053—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With respect to applications for the disability tax credit (DTC) by persons with type one diabetes which were rejected after the changes in wording to the letter to physicians in 2017 and were reviewed after the same changes in wording were reversed: (a) how many applications were reviewed; (b) how many of the applications in (a) were approved upon review; (c) how many of the applications in (a) were rejected again upon review; (d) how many of the applicants in (b) were notified of the approval; (e) how many of the applicants in (c) were notified of the rejection; (f) how many of the applicants in (c) were not notified of the rejection; (g) how many of the applicants in (c) appealed the rejection; (h) how many of the applicants in (f) were eligible to appeal the rejection; (i) how many of the applicants in (h) passed the due date for appeals without knowing about the rejection of their applications; and (j) had all applicants in (b) successfully appealed the rejection of their applications, how much would the aggregate disability tax credit claims cost on an annual basis?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2054—Mr. Jim Eglinski:

With regard to Canadian National Railway's (CN) potential discontinuance of a portion of the Foothills Subdivision and Mountain Spur in Alberta: (a) what analysis has the government undertaken of the potential impacts of this discontinuance; (b) what plans does the government have in place to address and mitigate the impacts; (c) what is the government's position with regard to accepting the line at a cost not higher than the net salvage value of the rail line; (d) what is the government's estimate of the current net salvage value of this rail line; (e) is the government aware of any other plans by CN to discontinue any other portions of the rail line, and if so, what are these plans; and (f) does the government plan to include funding for the Foothills Subdivision and Mountain Spur and other similar cases in Budget 2019?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2056—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to federal contracts with SNC-Lavalin: (a) are there any contingency plans in place for the 148 existing contracts in the event that SNC-Lavalin becomes ineligible to receive government contracts; (b) has the government sent tenders, letters of intent, or requests for quotation to SNC-Lavalin since April 27, 2013; (c) if the answer to (b) is affirmative, on what occasions was this done and what were the projects in question; (d) for all contracts awarded to SNC-Lavalin since 2013, what

were the successful bid amounts; (e) for all completed contracts awarded to SNC-Lavalin since 2013, what amount of money was actually disbursed for each contract; (f) for any contracts that were amended after being awarded since 2013, (i) what contracts were amended, (ii) for what reason were they amended; (g) in general, what is the process for approving amendments to contracts; (h) which buildings owned by the federal government does SNC-Lavalin currently maintain or manage; and (i) what incidents, broken down by category (e.g. critical, health and safety, security) and date, have occurred in government facilities maintained or operated by SNC-Lavalin, or in SNC-Lavalin facilities occupied by government departments?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2057—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regards to the Statutes of Canada, 2018, Chapter 16 (Cannabis Act), where Part 6, Section 93(2) of the Regulations state that "...cannabis may contain residues of a pest control product, its components or derivatives, if they do not exceed any maximum residue limit, in relation to cannabis, specified for the pest control product, its components or derivatives under section 9 or 10 of the Pest Control Products Act...": (a) has Health Canada defined a maximum residue limit for residual chemicals in recreational cannabis as a commodity; (b) if the answer to (a) is positive (i) what is the maximum residue limit, (ii) have the public databases on maximum residue limits been updated to reflect the maximum residue limit for recreational cannabis; (c) if the answer to (a) is negative, does Health Canada intend to define a maximum residue limit for residual chemicals in recreational cannabis; (d) if the answer to (c) is positive, when does Health Canada intend to publish the maximum residue limit for residual chemicals in recreational cannabis; and (e) if the answer to (c) is negative, will Part 6, Section 93(2) of the Regulations apply to recreational cannabis as a commodity?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2058—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regards to applications for visitor visas since January 1, 2016, broken down by calendar year: (a) what number of people from Pakistan have applied for a visitor visa; (b) for each applicant in (a), what number were identified as Christian on their passports; (c) for each applicant in (b), what number were granted visitor visas; (d) for each applicant in (c), what number of adult applicants had annual incomes of 252,000 Pakistani rupees (PKR), or 3,000 Canadian dollars, or less; (e) for each applicant in (d), what number of people claimed asylum in Canada; (f) for each applicant in (e), what number were granted asylum; and (g) for each response provided in (a) through (f), what is the breakdown by gender?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2059—Mr. Bernard Généreux:

With regard to expenditures related to the 2018 G7 Summit in Charlevoix: (a) what is the total cost of all expenditures to date; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) vendor, (ii) description of goods or services, (iii) quantity, (iv) amount, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2060—Mr. Earl Dreshen:

With regard to the "capability gap" in relation to military aircraft and fighter jets: what are the details of all briefing documents related to the matter since November 4, 2015, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) summary, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2061—Mr. Alexander Nuttall:

With regard to Statistics Canada's plan to harvest data from Canadians' bank accounts: for each of the next five years, what is the projected revenue that the agency will receive as a result of selling information or statistics obtained as a result of the project?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2062—Mr. Scott Duvall:**

With regard to public consultations planned in Budget 2018 concerning retirement income security following the "Sears" case, between February 2018 and November 2, 2018, broken down by month: (a) did the Minister of Seniors conduct public consultations; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, which individuals and organizations did the Minister of Seniors consult; (c) what are the recommendations or conclusions of the persons and organizations consulted, broken down by person and organization consulted; (d) in which municipalities did these meetings take place; (e) in which electoral districts did these meetings take place; and (f) were the Members of Parliament representing the constituencies referred to in (e) invited to these meetings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2063—Mr. Don Davies:

With regard to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's May 14, 2018, decision to suspend the processing of permanent resident visas for adoptive children from Japan: (a) who made the decision; (b) what was the rationale for the decision; (c) what evidence was provided to support the decision; (d) have officials from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada communicated with the State Department of the United States with respect to the decision; (e) have officials from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada communicated with the British Columbia Director of Adoption with respect to the decision; (f) why did Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada approve visas for the Japan-born adoptive children of five families from British Columbia in June 2018 despite the suspension on adoptions from Japan; (g) what are the specific questions on which Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada is seeking clarification from the government of Japan; (h) what were the responses, if any, that the government received from Japan; (i) what concerns, if any, does the government have with the Japan adoption program; and (j) has there been a change in policy with regard to adoption from non-Hague countries?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2064—Mr. Don Davies:

With regard to the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy (FTCS), broken down by fiscal year 2016-17 and 2017-18: (a) what was the budget for the FTCS; (b) how much of that budget was spent within the fiscal year; (c) how much was spent on each component of the FTCS, specifically, (i) mass media, (ii) policy and regulatory development, (iii) research, (iv) surveillance, (v) enforcement, (vi) grants and contributions, (vii) programs for Indigenous Canadians; (d) were any other activities not listed in (c) funded by the FTCS and, if so, how much was spent on each of these activities; and (e) was part of the budget reallocated for purposes other than tobacco control and, if so, how much was reallocated?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2066—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the federal agency Invest in Canada: (a) what is the remuneration range for its Board of Directors; (b) what are the details of all travel expenses incurred by Invest in Canada since its inception, including for each expenditure the (i) traveller, (ii) purpose, (iii) dates, (iv) air fare, (v) other transportation, (vi) accommodation, (vii) meals and incidentals, (viii) other, (ix) total; (c) what are the details of all hospitality expenses incurred by Invest in Canada, including for each expenditure the (i) individual, (ii) location and vendor, (iii) total, (iv) description, (v) date, (vi) number of attendees, including government employees and guests; (d) will the agency's travel and hospitality expenditures be subject to proactive disclosure and, if not, why; and (e) since Invest in Canada's inception, what are the details of the contracts awarded, including (i) date of contract, (ii) value of contract, (iii) vendor name, (iv) file number, (v) description of services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2067—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to Environment and Climate Change Canada's YouTube channel since November 4, 2015: (a) how many full-time equivalents manage the channel; (b) what are the titles and corresponding pay scales of the full-time equivalents who manage the channel; (c) how much has been spent on overtime pay for the full-time equivalents who manage the channel; (d) how much has been spent on developing content for the channel, and how much is earmarked to be spent for the remainder of the 2018-19 fiscal year; (e) how much has been spent on promoting content for the

channel, and how much is earmarked to be spent for the remainder of the 2018-19 fiscal year; (f) is there a cross-platform promotion plan to share content from the channel to other digital media platforms; (g) are the costs associated with the plan described in (f) included in the YouTube budget, or do they fall within the budget of the other platforms; (h) what are the digital media platforms used to promote or share the Minister's YouTube content; (i) what is the monthly expenditure on the channel, broken down by month; (j) what is the cost associated with each video on the channel; and (k) what is the annual expenditure on the channel, broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2068—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to Government of Canada electric vehicles: (a) how many electric vehicles does the government have in the greater Ottawa area; (b) of the vehicles in (a) what are the makes, models, and years for each of those vehicles; (c) when were these vehicles purchased, broken down by amount purchased per month; (d) how many charging stations does the government have in the Ottawa area; (e) of the charging stations in (d), when were they installed; (f) to date, what is the cost of the installation of charging stations; and (g) what is the kw/h used at the charging stations by month since they have been installed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2069—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the government's Mandate Letter Tracker tool: (a) what is the methodology in determining the current status of a commitment; (b) what metrics are used to differentiate between a commitment which has "made progress" and those that have "made progress toward ongoing goal"; (c) what metrics are used to determine if a commitment is "facing challenges"; (d) which department is responsible for the mandate letter tracker; (e) how many full-time equivalents monitor and maintain the mandate letter tracker; and (f) of the FTE's in (e) what are their employment classifications?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2073—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the business activities of the Royal Canadian Mint (the Mint) for the fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017: (a) what was the total revenue received from the Mint's numismatic business activities for each year; (b) what was the total revenue received from the Mint's bullion products and services function for each year; (c) what were the total profits earned from the Mint's numismatic business activities for each year; (d) what were the total profits earned from the Mint's bullion products and services function for each year; (e) what countries did the Mint provide numismatic products to in each year, broken down by the percentage of business activity in each country; (f) what countries did the Mint provide bullion products to in each year, broken down by percentage of business activity in each country; (g) what was the total value of bullion products sold by the Mint to Canadian customers for each year; (h) what are the names of the Canadian distributors and customers that the Mint sold bullion products to in each year, broken down by the value of bullion products sold to them; (i) what was the total value of numismatic products sold to Canadian distributors and customers for each year; (j) what are the names of the Canadian distributors and customers that the Mint sold numismatic products to in each year, broken down by the value of numismatic products sold to them; (k) what was the total value of bullion products sold by the Mint to American distributors and customers for each year; (l) what are the names of the American distributors and customers that the Mint sold bullion products to in each year, broken down by the value of bullions product sold to them; (m) what was the total value of numismatic products sold to American distributors and customers for each year; (n) what are the names of the American distributors and customers that the Mint sold numismatic products to in each year, broken down by the value of numismatic products sold to them; and (o) what is the alphabetical list of all approved bullion and numismatic distributors and customers that the Mint sells to for each year?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2074—Mr. Peter Julian:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank, since its creation: (a) what is the number of meetings held with Canadian and foreign investors, broken down by (i) month, (ii) country, (iii) investor class; (b) what is the complete list of investors met with; and (c) what are the details of the contracts awarded by the Canada Infrastructure Bank, including (i) date of contract, (ii) value of contract, (iii) vendor name, (iv) file number, (v) description of services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2077—Mr. Alupa A. Clarke:

With regard to all Government of Canada communications (meetings, emails, letters, telephone calls, teleconferences, etc.) regarding (i) the emission of red dust in Limoilou and Québec, (ii) all other possible emissions from the Port of Québec's industrial and port activities, including various dusts and noxious odours in Limoilou and Québec, (iii) public health, (iv) all forms of emissions under the responsibility of the Ministère des Transports du Québec, in particular from nearby highways, (v) all forms of emissions from the Québec incinerator, (vi) all other forms of dust and emissions that may come from other areas, broken down by subject: what are the details of each communication, including (i) the date, (ii) the sender, (iii) the recipient, (iv) the title and subject, (v) the type of communication, (vi) the file number, (vii) the content surrounding each subject since November 4, 2015, between the government and (a) Port of Québec authorities; (b) the office of the Mayor of Québec; (c) the Government of Québec; (d) the MNA for Jean-Lesage; (e) the MNA for Taschereau; (f) Quebec Stevedoring Company Ltd. (QSL), formerly Arrimage du Saint-Laurent; (g) companies operating on Port of Québec lands?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2078—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to government spending and charges laid pertaining to matters of national security: (a) how much has been spent annually since 2015 by each department investigating and prosecuting Vice Admiral Mark Norman, specifically (i) the RCMP, (ii) the Public Prosecution Services, (iii) the Privy Council Office (PCO), (iv) the Department of National Defence (DND), (v) the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), (vi) any other department or agency; (b) how much has been spent by each department investigating the 1,366 incidences of actionable financial intelligence on money laundering identified by the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) in 2017, specifically (i) the RCMP, (ii) the Public Prosecution Service, (iii) PCO, (iv) any other department; (c) how much has been spent by each department investigating and prosecuting the 462 terrorism financing and threats to the security of Canada identified by FINTRAC in 2016 and 2017, specifically (i) the RCMP, (ii) the Public Prosecution Services, (iii) PCO, (iv) DND, (v) the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), (vi) any other department or agency; (d) how much has been spent by each department investigating and prosecuting the 187 actionable financial transactions related to money laundering, terrorism, terrorism financing and threats to the security of Canada identified by FINTRAC in 2016 and 2017, specifically (i) the RCMP, (ii) the Public Prosecution Services, (iii) PCO, (iv) DND, (v) CSIS, (vi) any other department or agency; (e) how many charges related to specific incidences of terrorism financing reported by FINTRAC were laid in (i) 2015, (ii) 2016, (iii) 2017, (iv) 2018; and (f) how many of the cases in (e) have resulted in successful prosecutions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2079—Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Liechtenstein leaks, the Panama Papers and the Bahamas Leaks: (a) how many Canadian taxpayers were identified in the documents obtained, broken down by information leak and type of taxpayer, that is (i) an individual, (ii) a corporation, (iii) a partnership or trust; (b) how many audits did the CRA launch following the identification of taxpayers in (a), broken down by information leak; (c) of the audits in (b), how many were referred to the CRA's Criminal Investigations Program, broken down by information leak; (d) how many of the investigations in (c) were referred to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, broken down by information leak; (e) how many of the investigations in (d) resulted in a conviction, broken down by information leak; and (f) what was the sentence imposed for each conviction in (e), broken down by information leak?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2080—Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault:

With regard to real estate and office space leased by the government from private sector businesses since November 4, 2015, broken down by department or agency: what are the details of all the contracts, including (i) vendor; (ii) amount; (iii) start and end date of the contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2081—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to Transport Canada's Community Participation Funding Program: (a) what are the details of all recipients of funding under the program since November 4, 2015, including the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) start date of the related activity or event, (iv) description and title of the activity or event, (v) purpose of funding; and (b) what are the details of all applicants who were denied funding under the program, including the (i) name, (ii) date of application, (iii) summary or description of the event related to the proposal, (iv) reason why the funding request was denied?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2082—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to the \$6 million budget for the Leader's Debates Commission: what is the breakdown of how the \$6 million is projected to be spent by standard object and line item?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2084—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:

With regard to government contracts with Cossette Communication Inc., especially the decision to pay \$499,800 to come up with a brand, logo, name and website for FinDev Canada: (a) on what date was the FinDev Canada contract signed; (b) on what date was the Minister of International Development or the Minister's office informed that the contract in (a) existed; (c) who authorized the amount of the contract in (a) to be increased from the original value to \$499,800; (d) what was the rationale or justification for increasing the original value of the contract in (a); (e) what are the details of all other contracts any department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity has entered into with Cossette Communication Inc. since November 4, 2015, including the (i) date and duration (ii) amount, (iii) final contract value, (iv) original contract value, if different than the final, (v) justification for increasing the original contract value, if applicable, (vi) detailed description of goods or services provided, (vii) name of advertising or other campaign relevant to the contract; and (f) what is the total value of contracts entered into with Cossette Communication Inc. since November 4, 2015?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2086—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to Tax-Free Savings Accounts (TFSA) in Canada for the three most recent tax years available: (a) what is the total number of TFSAs, broken down by age groups (i) 15 to 24, (ii) 25 to 34, (iii) 35 to 54, (iv) 55 to 64, (v) 65 and above; (b) what is the total value of TFSAs, broken down by amounts (i) under \$100,000, (ii) \$100,000 to \$250,000, (iii) \$250,000 to \$500,000, (iv) \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, (v) over \$1,000,000; (c) how many individuals have a TFSA; and (d) how many individuals have multiple TFSAs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2087—Mr. Chris Warkentin:

With regard to the leaking of information from Cabinet meetings or Cabinet committee meetings, since November 4, 2015: (a) of how many instances of leaked information is the government aware; (b) how many individuals have been, or are, under investigation for leaking such information; (c) have any ministers been investigated for leaking such information and, if so, which ones; and (d) have any former ministers been investigated for leaking such information and, if so, which ones?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2088—Ms. Lisa Raitt:**

With regard to communication sent or received by Statistics Canada since January 1, 2017: (a) what are the details of all communication between Statistics Canada and the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, the Office of the Minister or the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) subject matter, (vi) summary of contents, (vii) format (email, letter, teleconference, etc.); (b) what are the details of all communication between Statistics Canada and banks or other financial institutions, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) subject matter, (vi) summary of contents, (vii) format (email, letter, teleconference, etc.); and (c) what are the details of all communication between Statistics Canada and the Office of the Prime Minister or the Privy Council Office, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title, (v) subject matter, (vi) summary of contents, (vii) format (email, letter, teleconference, etc.).

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2089—Mr. Guy Lauzon:

With regard to the government's "price on pollution" or carbon tax: what was the "price on pollution" or carbon tax revenue that the federal government received as a result of the 2018 dump of 162 million litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River in or around Longueuil, Quebec?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2090—Mr. Deepak Ohrai:

With regard to expenditures related to the Fall Economic Statement in November 2018: (a) what is the total of all expenditures related to the statement; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) detailed description of goods or services, (v) location of vendor, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2091—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to the government's policies and protocols in relation to spider sightings and sending government employees home: (a) how many employees from Shared Services Canada were sent home as a result of the alleged spider sightings at the building located at 2300 St. Laurent Blvd, Ottawa, in 2018; (b) on what dates were employees sent home; (c) what is the breakdown of how many employees were sent home on each date in (b); (d) were any dangerous spiders discovered as a result of the sightings and, if so, which ones; (e) how much did the government spend on fumigation, investigations or other activities resulting from the sightings and what is the detailed breakdown of such expenditures; and (f) what are the government's policies and protocols for when spiders are allegedly sighted on government property and when to send employees home?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2092—Mr. Peter Julian:

With regards to the three proposed tax provisions in the 2018 Fall Economic Statement to accelerate business investment and their impact on provincial revenue: (a) has the Department of Finance calculated the forgone revenue estimates for provinces and, if not, why; (b) what are the calculated forgone revenue estimates, broken down for each fiscal year until 2023-24, (i) for each province, (ii) by provision; (c) how many times has this topic been discussed with the government and has the question been raised with the Minister or Deputy Minister and, if so, has the Minister provided a response and, if so, what was it; (d) has there been any briefing with detailed information on the matter and for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title and subject matter, (iii) the department's internal tracking number; (e) were provincial officials notified of the government's intent to change these provisions and their fiscal implication and, if not, why; (f) which provincial officials were contacted; (g) which provinces shared concerns about revenues loss stemming from these provisions; and (h) what was the nature of these concerns?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2093—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to the August 2018 letter sent by the Minister of Health to the then Quebec Health Minister warning that the government would cut health care transfer

payments to the province if it continued to allow patients to pay out of pocket for medical exams: (a) which other provinces or territories have received similar warning letters from the Minister since November 4, 2015; and (b) what are the details of each letter, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) nature and summary of the warning?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2094—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard Statistics Canada's plan to harvest financial transaction data and the claim by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development that he found out about the plan through the media: (a) on what date did Statistics Canada begin developing the plan; (b) on what date did Statistics Canada notify banks or financial institutions about the plan; (c) on what date did Statistics Canada notify the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development about the plan; and (d) on what date did Statistics Canada notify the Privacy Commissioner about the plan?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2095—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to expenditures on cellular services by the Privy Council Office (PCO) and the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO): (a) what is the total of all such expenditures since December 1, 2015, broken down by month; (b) what is the total number of devices in use, broken down by month and type of device; (c) what is the average expenditure for cellular services per device, per month; (d) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by (i) PCO, excluding exempt staff, (ii) exempt staff in the PMO, (iii) exempt staff in other ministers offices under the PCO (Government House Leader, Minister of Democratic Institutions and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs); and (e) what is the breakdown of (a) and (b) by vendor or service provider?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2096—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to France in November 2018: (a) who took part in the trip, broken down by (i) exempt staff of the Office of the Prime Minister, (ii) Members of Parliament, (iii) Senators, (iv) employees of the Privy Council Office, (v) other guests; (b) for each of the participants identified in (a), what were the costs of the trip, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) accommodation, (iii) travel, (iv) meals, (v) all other expenses; (c) what were the details for all of the hospitality activities and events during the trip, including (i) the dates, (ii) the cities, (iii) the number of attendees, (iv) the total costs; and (d) what agreements or arrangements were signed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2097—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the Minister of Finance's trip to China in November 2018: (a) who went on the trip, broken down by (i) Minister's staff, (ii) Members of Parliament, (iii) Senators, (iv) departmental employees, (v) other guests; (b) for each person identified in (a), what were the travel costs, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) accommodation, (iii) travel, (iv) meals, (v) all other expenses; (c) what are the details of all events and representation activities during the trip, including (i) dates, (ii) cities, (iii) number of participants, (iv) total costs; and (d) what agreements were signed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2098—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:

With regard to the speech made by the Minister of Finance to the Canada China Business Council in November 2018: (a) did the Minister know that journalists had been denied access before making his speech; (b) if the answer in (a) is affirmative, why did the Minister agree to make his speech if journalists were excluded; (c) what are the government's guidelines regarding journalists' access to events involving ministers; (d) did the Minister follow the guidelines in (c); and (e) what is the government's position on the prohibition on journalists during the Minister's speech?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2099—Mr. Alexandre Boulerice:**

With regard to land owned by the Department of National Defence on the slopes of Mont-Saint-Bruno: (a) what are the department's plans for this 441-hectare wooded area adjacent to the national park; (b) will it respond favourably to the request by the executive committee of the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, Mouvement Ceinture Verte, Fondation du Mont-Saint-Bruno and the Municipality of Saint-Bruno-de-Mantarville to incorporate the area in its entirety into Mont-Saint-Bruno provincial park; and (c) when will the Department of National Defence make a decision on the sale, transfer or retention of the area?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2100—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to the consultations and roundtables with stakeholders launched in October 2018 by the Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction in relation to firearms: (a) what are the details of each consultation or roundtable discussion, including (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) stakeholders in attendance, (iv) Ministers or Members of Parliament in attendance; (b) who decided which stakeholders would be invited to the discussions, and what criteria was used; and (c) what is the complete list of stakeholders who were (i) invited, (ii) attended the consultations or roundtables?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2103—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:

With regards to Budget 2016 Growing the Middle Class and the median wage income: (a) what are the details of all documents, including spreadsheets, used to create Chart 1 Real median wage income of Canadians, 1975-2015, in the Budget, broken down by (i) median wage income of women, (ii) median wage income of men, (iii) median wage income; (b) is the data regarding the median wage income of Canadians available for the most recent years after 2015 and, if so, which years; and (c) if the answer to (b) is affirmative, what are the details of all documents, including spreadsheets, regarding the median wage income of Canadians for each of the most recent years available after 2015, broken down annually by (i) median wage income of women, (ii) median wage income of men, (iii) median wage income?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2104—Mr. David Tilson:

With regard to the process for renewing expiring permanent residency cards: (a) what is the average processing time for a card renewal; (b) what is the average time between when an application for renewal is received by the government and when the replacement card is ready; (c) what is the specific process the government undertakes for card renewals; (d) what specific options are available to residents who wish to travel abroad and have submitted their expiring card to the government as part of the renewal application, but who are still waiting for the government to provide them with a replacement card; and (e) what specific changes will the government make in order to make it easier for permanent residents to travel aboard during the renewal period?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2107—Mr. Larry Miller:

With regard to the Prime Minister's tweet on December 2, 2018, pledging \$50 million to Education Cannot Wait: was this funding approved by the Treasury Board before or after the Prime Minister posted the tweet?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2108—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to government policies and procedures: what are the government's policies and procedures when a sitting Cabinet minister is being investigated by the RCMP?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2109—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to the Safe Third Country Agreement: how many individuals have been exempted from the Safe Third Country Agreement due to the presence of a relative in Canada who crossed the border "irregularly" since January 1, 2016?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2110—Mr. Larry Maguire:

With regard to the government's prompt payment consultation process, since consultations started: (a) how many meetings have taken place and where did they take place; (b) how many individuals or companies have participated; (c) how many responses have been received; (d) what are the total costs to undertake the consultations; (e) when are the consultations ending; and (f) when will the consultations and information collected be provided to the Minister's office?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2111—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to the government's Connect to Innovate Program first announced in the 2016 Budget: (a) what is the total of all expenditures to date under the program; and (b) what are the details of all projects funded to date under the program, including (i) recipient of funding, (ii) name of the project, (iii) location, (iv) project start date, (v) amount of funding pledged, (vi) amount of funding actually provided to date, (vii) description of the project?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2112—Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to the Prime Minister's recent comment that "There are impacts when you bring construction workers into a rural area": to what specific impacts was the Prime Minister referring?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2113—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to expenditures on furniture rentals by the government since January 1, 2016, broken down by department or agency: (a) what is the total of all expenditures; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date of the contract, (iv) delivery date of the furniture, (v) duration of the rental, (vi) itemized description, including the quantity of rentals, (vii) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2114—Mr. Bev Shipley:

With regard to projects funded since May 1, 2018, under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund: what are the details of all such projects, including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) recipient, (v) amount of federal contribution, (vi) date of announcement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2116—Mr. Dane Lloyd:

With regard to flights taken on chartered or government aircraft by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change since November 4, 2015: (a) what are the details of all flights, including (i) date, (ii) origin, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers; and (b) what are the details of any contract related to the flights in (a), including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date and duration of contract, (iv) description of goods or services?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2118—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake and the revelation at the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on December 3, 2018, that certain programs at the base were either being moved to Ottawa or are under consideration to be moved to Ottawa: (a) what is the complete list of programs which are either being moved or are under consideration for being moved out of Cold Lake, and to where are each of those programs possibly being moved; and (b) what are the government's projections regarding the number of individuals subject to transfer away from Cold Lake as a result of each move in (a), broken down by program?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2119—Ms. Karine Trudel:**

With regard to the Minister of International Trade's trip to China in November 2018: (a) who went on the trip, broken down by (i) Minister's staff, (ii) Members of Parliament, (iii) Senators, (iv) departmental employees, (v) other guests; (b) for each person identified in (a), what were the travel costs, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) accommodation, (iii) travel, (iv) meals, (v) all other expenses; (c) what are the details of all events and representation activities during the trip, including (i) dates, (ii) cities, (iii) number of participants, (iv) total costs; and (d) what agreements were signed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2120—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to ministerial permits: (a) how many Temporary Resident Visas issued under ministerial permit have been granted, broken down by month between November 2015 and December 2018; and (b) how many Temporary Resident Permits issued under ministerial permit have been granted, broken down by month between November 2015 and December 2018?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2121—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to requests from Members of Parliament for Temporary Resident Visas: (a) what is the number of requests received from Members since January 1, 2016, broken down by year; (b) what is the number of requests received, broken down by individual Member; and (c) what is the number of requests granted, broken down by individual Member?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2122—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to requests from Members of Parliament for Temporary Resident Permits: (a) what is the number of requests received from Members since January 1, 2016, broken down by year; (b) what is the number of requests received, broken down by individual Member; and (c) what is the number of requests granted, broken down by individual Member?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2123—Mr. Mark Warawa:

With regard to the Canadian delegation to the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) in Katowice, Poland: (a) what is the total number of members of the delegation, including any accompanying staff, broken down by organization; (b) what is the title of each member of the delegation, broken down by organization; (c) what is the total allocated budget for the delegation; and (d) what is projected or estimated travel and hospitality expenses for the delegation, broken down by type of expense?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2124—Mr. Jim Eglinski:

With regard to the lack of enforcement actions by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA): (a) what is the budget of the CTA for the calendar years (i) 2013, (ii) 2014, (iii) 2015, (iv) 2016, (v) 2017, (vi) 2018; (b) what is the number of complaints received by the CTA between 2013 and 2018, broken down by year; (c) what is the number of cases where the CTA representatives turned away any complaints by passengers between 2013 and 2018, broken down by year; (d) what is the number of enforcement actions taken between 2013 and 2018, broken down by year; (e) why has the number of complaints received by the CTA quadrupled between 2013 and 2017, while enforcement actions have seen a near four-fold decrease during the same period; (f) for what reason has the CTA taken no enforcement action against Air Canada for defying Decision No. 12-C-A-2018; (g) why did the Minister of Transport not investigate the allegations of fabrication and fraud levelled against CTA staff who turned away valid complaints by passengers; and (h) what steps has the Minister of Transport taken against the airlines and crew involved in defrauding consumers and authorities in what was referred to as the "Mexican Game", where airlines misled aviation authorities and its passengers about unscheduled stops on flights from Mexico?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2125—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to government expenditures on Canada Goose products since November 4, 2015: what are the details of all expenditures, including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) description of the product, including the volume, (iv) rationale for the purchase, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2126—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to expenditures on hospitality by Environment and Climate Change Canada from December 2, 2018, through December 6, 2018: what are the details of each such expenditure, including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) location, (iv) vendor name, (v) number of individuals in attendance, (vi) description of the event, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2127—Mr. Matthew Dubé:

With regard to applications for grants and contributions to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Canada Economic Development Agency for the Regions of Quebec, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, the Northern Ontario Economic Development Initiative and Western Economic Diversification Canada, since November 2015: (a) what applications were first approved by officials within the agencies and organizations listed above, but then rejected by the Office of the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, broken down by agency and organization; and (b) what applications were first refused by officials within the agencies and organizations listed above, but then approved by the Office of the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, broken down by agency and organization?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2128—Mr. Matthew Dubé:

With regard to the pensions of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of federal agencies or other federal organizations, since November 2015: (a) how many CEOs are deemed not to be part of the public service for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation Act; (b) how many times did a minister or any other public office holder order that a CEO be deemed to be part of the public service for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation Act, broken down by (i) name of CEO, (ii) federal organization, (iii) minister or public office holder responsible for the order, (vi) the rationale behind the order; and (c) what is the estimated total pension income, broken down for each case where a CEO has been deemed part of the public service for the purposes of the Public Service Superannuation Act further to an order?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2129—Mr. Matthew Dubé:

With regard to Health Canada's re-evaluation decisions, including RVD2017-01, Glyphosate, and the "Monsanto Papers": (a) how many and which studies are currently being re-evaluated by Health Canada; (b) for each of the studies in (a), when did Health Canada make the decision to re-evaluate it; (c) has Health Canada verified the independence of the studies in (a); (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, what was the detailed process for verifying the independence of the studies; and (e) does Health Canada have information that approved independent studies were written by Monsanto and, if so, since what date, broken down by study?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2130—Mr. Matthew Dubé:

With regard to the taxation of businesses, since November 2015: (a) how many Canadian businesses have not paid tax for each of the following fiscal years (i) 2015, (ii) 2016, (iii) 2017, (iv) 2018; and (b) how much tax was deferred by the businesses in (a) in fiscal years (i) 2015, (ii) 2016, (iii) 2017, (iv) 2018?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2131—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:**

With regard to reports of a \$355,950 sole-sourced contract to pay Torstar Corporation, which was cancelled following a complaint to the Procurement Ombudsman: (a) what was the original purpose of the contract; (b) which minister initially approved the contract; (c) does the government have enough employees to monitor parliamentary committees without hiring the Toronto Star; and (d) what is the total number of government employees whose job involved, in whole or in part, monitoring parliamentary committees?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2132—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to classified and protected documents, since January 1, 2017, broken down by department or agency: (a) how many instances have occurred where it was discovered that classified or protected documents were left or stored in a manner which did not meet the requirements of the security level of the documents; (b) how many of the infractions in (a) occurred in the offices of ministerial exempt staff, including the staff of the Prime Minister, broken down by ministerial office; and (c) how many employees have lost their security clearance as a result of such infractions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2133—Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to funding on infrastructure and the Prime Minister's comment that "there are impacts when you bring construction workers into a rural area": (a) does the Prime Minister's comment represent the position of the government; (b) how many cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities have declined funding for infrastructure projects because such projects would involve bringing in construction workers; and (c) have any mayors or elected officials of rural towns or cities requested that the government not provide infrastructure funding for projects which would lead to more construction workers and, if so, which ones and what towns or cities do they represent?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2134—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the MV Polar Prince and the Canada C3 expedition: (a) since the ship was certified to carry an aggregate of 60 individuals, including passengers, crew and special expedition personnel, why was the vessel over capacity for 6 of the 15 legs of the journey; (b) since the ship was certified to carry 12 passengers, why were more passengers onboard for all 15 legs of the journey; (c) was the Minister of Transport aware that the ship was carrying more individuals, and passengers in particular, than that for which it was certified; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, when was the Minister made aware; and (e) did the Minister approve the vessel to be over capacity and, if so, why?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2135—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs: what are the details of all lawsuits settled by the Department between January 2016 and December 2018, including (i) title of case, (ii) reason for lawsuit, (iii) litigants, (iv) legal fees, (v) fiscal total of the settlement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2136—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the government's response to Q-1982 regarding the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada office located at 365 Hargrave Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba: (a) why was the government's rationale for no longer allowing access to the general public without an appointment not provided in the response to Q-1982; (b) what is the government's rationale for not allowing access to the general public without an appointment; (c) how many clients were served at this location between January 2015 and September 2018, broken down by month; and (d) what is the breakdown of (c) by purpose of visit (Employment Insurance, obtaining a status card, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2137—Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to the government's response to Q-2006 that the Global Affairs Summit Management Office did not incur any expenses for yoga teachers for the Prime Minister during the 2018 G7 Summit in Charlevoix: (a) did any other departments or agencies incur yoga-related expenses during the G7 Summit in Charlevoix and, if so, what are the details of such expenses, including amounts; and (b) who paid for the Prime Minister's yoga instructor in Charlevoix during the time of the G7 Summit?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2138—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to government and Canadian Armed Forces policies for the Vimy Officers' Mess in Kingston, Ontario: (a) on what date was the booking accepted by the Department of National Defence or the Canadian Armed Forces for the December 19, 2018, Liberal Party fundraising event with the Prime Minister, which was subsequently cancelled; (b) what is the title of the individual who initially accepted the booking; (c) did the Privy Council Office advise the Office of the Prime Minister that attending a partisan event on Canadian Armed Forces property violated government policy and, if so, when was such advice given; and (d) why did the Prime Minister initially agree to attend an event which was in violation of government policy?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2139—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to Hillside Cottage (1915), the oldest structure in Banff National Park: (a) what measures are being undertaken to preserve and restore the structure; (b) what measures are in place to prevent the decay, vandalism or incidental destruction of the structure; and (c) what is being done to promote and recognize the history and significance of the structure?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2140—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to the proposed Eagle Spirit Energy Corridor project for a pipeline between Fort McMurray, Alberta, and Grassy Point, British Columbia: (a) has the government conducted an analysis of the impact of Bill C-48, the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, on the proposed project and, if so, what are the details of such an analysis, including the findings; and (b) will the government exempt vessels transporting oil in relation to the project from the moratorium proposed in Bill C-48?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2141—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to the number of RCMP officers: (a) what is the total number of active RCMP officers as of (i) January 1, 2016, (ii) January 1, 2017, (iii) January 1, 2018, (iv) December 1, 2018; (b) what are the names and locations of each RCMP detachment; and (c) what is the breakdown of the number of RCMP officers assigned to each detachment as of (i) January 1, 2016, (ii) January 1, 2017, (iii) January 1, 2018, (iv) December 1, 2018?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2142—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to government resources used to handle the situation involving illegal or irregular border crossers and asylum seekers, since January 1, 2016: what is the number of RCMP and CBSA personnel whose duties were, in whole or in part, assigned to handle the illegal or irregular border crossers, broken down by (i) province, (ii) month?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 2143—Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:**

With regard to the Minister of Youth, the Prime Minister's Youth Council, the Youth Secretariat and the Youth Policy for Canada: (a) what is the decision-making flow chart for the Prime Minister's Youth Council; (b) what is the total amount spent and the total budget for the Youth Council since it was established, broken down by year; (c) what amounts in the Youth Council budget are allocated for salaries, broken down by (i) year, (ii) position, (iii) per diem or any other reimbursement or expense (telecommunications, transportation, office supplies, furniture, etc.) offered or attributed to each of the positions mentioned in (c)(ii); (d) what are the dates, locations and number of participants for each of the meetings held by the Youth Council since June 2017, broken down by (i) in-person meetings, (ii) virtual meetings; (e) how much did the government spend to hold each of the Youth Council meetings mentioned in (d), broken down by (i) costs associated with renting a room, (ii) costs associated with food and drinks, (iii) costs associated with security, (iv) costs associated with transportation and the nature of this transportation, (v) costs associated with telecommunications; (f) what is the decision-making flow chart for the Privy Council's Youth Secretariat, including each of the positions associated with the Youth Secretariat; (g) what is the total amount spent and the total budget of the Youth Secretariat since it was established, broken down by year; (h) what amounts in the Youth Secretariat budget are allocated for salaries, broken down by (i) year, (ii) position, (iii) per diem or any other reimbursement or expense (telecommunications, transportation, office supplies, furniture, etc.) offered or attributed to each of the positions mentioned in (h)(ii); (i) what is the official mandate of the Youth Secretariat; (j) what is the relationship between the Prime Minister's Youth Council and the Youth Secretariat (organizational ties, financial ties, logistical support, etc.); (k) is the Youth Secretariat responsible for youth bursaries, services or programs; (l) if the answer to (k) is affirmative, what amounts were allocated to these bursaries, services or programs since they were established, broken down by (i) the nature of the bursary, service or program funded, (ii) the location of the program, (iii) the start and end date of the bursary, service or program; (m) who are all the people who are working or have worked on the Youth Policy for Canada as part of the Office of the Prime Minister or the Office of the Minister of Youth, broken down by role and by start and end date; (n) what consultations were carried out in connection with the youth policy, and what are the dates, locations and number of participants for each consultation held, as well as a description of the topics discussed, broken down by (i) in-person meetings, (ii) virtual meetings; and (o) how much did the government spend to hold each of the consultations mentioned in (n), broken down by (i) costs associated with renting a room, (ii) costs associated with food and drinks, (iii) costs associated with security, (iv) costs associated with transportation and the nature of this transportation, (v) costs associated with telecommunications?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2145— Mr. Kevin Sorenson:

With regard to the \$19,682,232.17 spent by Environment and Climate Change Canada on payments to other international organizations (object code 2319) during the 2017-2018 fiscal year: what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) recipient, (ii) location of the recipient, (iii) purpose, (iv) date of the expenditure, (v) amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2146—Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:

With regard to the pipelines passing through the region of Vaudreuil-Soulanges: (a) since 2008, how many hydrostatic tests and any other safety tests (integrity, corrosion, etc.) have been conducted on all the pipelines over their entire length from Ontario to Quebec, broken down by (i) pipeline, (ii) type of test, (iii) date, (iv) federal entity or contractor, (v) test location and province, (vi) test result; (b) when requesting flow reversal for the 9B and Trans-Northern pipelines, did the government or any other entity calculate the greenhouse gas emissions upstream and downstream of the project; (c) if the answer in (b) is affirmative, what are the upstream and downstream emissions for each of the projects; (d) since 2008, how many leaks have there been on all the pipelines, in either Ontario or Quebec, broken down by (i) pipeline, (ii) location and province; (e) for each of the leaks in (d), what is (i) the quantity of the spill in litres, (ii) the company responsible for the pipeline, (iii) the direct or indirect cost to the federal government, (iv) the date of the spill, (v) the date on which the government or one of its regulatory agencies became aware of the spill; (f) since 2008, have the official emergency response plans been sent to the municipal public safety authorities and the regional county municipality for each of these pipelines; (g) if the answer in (f) is affirmative, for each plan sent, what is (i) the date it was sent, (ii) the date of confirmation of receipt, (iii) the names of the sender and the recipient; (h) since 2008, what are the details of all the cases of non-compliance,

deficiencies and violations of federal laws and regulations found by the National Energy Board with respect to the pipelines, including (i) the date, (ii) a description of the deficiency found and the corrective action requested, (iii) the location of the deficiency, (iv) the pipeline and the name of the company that owns the pipeline, (v) the amount of the fine paid; (i) for each case of non-compliance, deficiency or violation in (h), on what exact date did the National Energy Board or a federal government department follow up with the respective companies and verify that the corrective action had been carried out; (j) for each follow-up in (i), what actions were taken; (k) since 2008, how many detection system failures have been identified by the National Energy Board on the pipelines and what are the details of each failure, including (i) the date, (ii) the pipeline, (iii) the location, (iv) the reason for the failure; (l) for each pipeline, in the event of a spill in the Soulanges area, what is the expected time (i) to detect it, (ii) to stop the flow of oil, (iii) for emergency services to arrive on site; and (m) where are the companies that have been hired to respond to a spill in the Soulanges area and how long will it take them to arrive on site?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2147—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:

With respect to the Energy Services Acquisition Program and the modernization plan for the five heating and cooling plants and the associated infrastructure, including pipes and tunnels, in the National Capital Region: (a) has the government conducted any studies or evaluations of the plan, including but not limited to (i) a cost-benefit analysis of proceeding with the plan as a public-private partnership as opposed to a fully public implementation, (ii) an estimate of the plan's impact on the heating and cooling plants' greenhouse gas emissions; (b) for each study in (a), what are the details, including (i) dates, (ii) titles, (iii) file numbers, (iv) value for money analysis, (v) metrics developed to assess the benefits of using the public private contract; (c) what are the consequences of this privatization with respect to (i) the number of public service jobs required for the maintenance and operation of the heating and cooling plants, (ii) the reliability of the heating and cooling plants, in particular, during extended power outages and when emergency repairs are required, (iii) site security and the security impact for any buildings served by the heating and cooling plants; (d) in what way were the relevant public sector unions informed of the plan, including (i) dates, (ii) process for consultation, (iii) timeline for participation; (e) in what ways was the input from the relevant public sector unions considered in the decision to move forward with the plan; (f) in what ways were the associated public unions informed of the ultimate decision; and (g) what are the projected impacts and planned changes on (i) the municipal infrastructure, (ii) the rest of the system outside of the heating and cooling plants themselves?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 2148—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:

With respect to the document "Allocations from Treasury Board Central Votes for Supplementary Estimates (A), 2018-19", published online: (a) for each allocation from "Vote 25—Operating Budget Carry Forward" and "Vote 35—Capital Budget Carry Forward" to a given "Organization", what is the corresponding "Authority"; and (b) why are authorities listed proactively for each allocation under "Vote 5 – Government Contingencies" and "Vote 40 – Budget Implementation", but not those under "Vote 25 – Operating Budget Carry Forward" and "Vote 35 – Capital Budget Carry Forward"?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***FEDERAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, like many of our colleagues, I listened to my friend across the way for a few hours. I guess we were in the other place, in the House of Commons, when the member started his speech. He has finally, to the relief of many, no doubt, concluded his remarks.

In his remarks, the member covered a fairly wide spectrum of concerns. One could list a series of questions, but I am going to limit it to one. Given the length and tenure of the debate from my friend across the way, could he give us an indication of what he believes the Conservative Party's approach on this legislation actually is, given that it seems to be the opinion of the member across the way that there might not be very many members who actually want to speak to it? Maybe that is one of the reasons he was so motivated to express himself.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have just been accused by the member for Winnipeg North of being verbose. That is truly incredible. It is almost like when the Prime Minister accuses other people of standing by the wealthy. This is a pattern of the Liberals that we see in so many areas. After being critical of the length of my remarks, he asked what the Conservative approach was to Bill C-57, as if he had not heard my remarks at all.

Let me just say, in summary of those remarks, that we believe in the importance of a sustainable approach across the board, an approach that involves thinking about the impacts the decisions we take today will have on the future. That is why we believe in a balanced budget. We know that the government's deficits will lead to further attempts by the government to increase taxes. If it gets a chance to do that after the next election, we can be sure that it will take every opportunity to raise taxes.

All of the failures of the Prime Minister when it comes to balancing the budget, when it comes to thinking ahead, will have concrete costs for Canadians.

On this side of the House, our approach to Bill C-57, our approach to sustainability, is to look for ways to ensure that Canadians can get ahead over the long term.

• (1545)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech relatively closely. He talked about many things in that speech, all of which was accurate and precise. The member across the aisle did not hear it, obviously. I would like the member to repeat some of the failures of the government and tell us what it is actually going to cost the constituents in my riding and Canadians right across the country.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, finally, a good question. There are so many failures of the government we could talk about. I

spoke about many of them in my remarks, but I will focus on one, and that is the failure of its so-called environmental policy.

The government does not have a plan for the environment. It has a plan to use the discussion of the environment as a tool to raise taxes. It is imposing a carbon tax. It will continue to increase the level of that carbon tax. We know that it will not improve the situation of the environment for the reasons, in particular, I talked about. The government is collecting GST on top of that.

This failure to have a real plan on the environment is costing everyday Canadians more. It is not costing everyone more, because the government has given a break to the largest emitters. It has given a break to those with well-placed lobbyists who could advocate for one. However, the government has not given a break to everyday working people in our constituencies. This is the clearest mark of the failure of the government. It is something we need to change. We need to get rid of the carbon tax so that we can help Canadians who are trying to get ahead have more money in their pockets to do just that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, there was so much misinformation provided by my friend across the way. He talked about sustainability. As a part of that, he talked a great deal about taxation, yet when it really came down to the government of the day putting a special tax on Canada's wealthiest, the Conservatives voted against it. When it came time for a tax break for Canada's middle class, the Conservatives voted against that too.

When we talk about sustainability of the family and trying to ensure that families have prosperity, we can look at the Canada child benefit. Again, that was enhanced by this government and opposed by the Conservatives.

On the one hand, the Conservatives try to fool Canadians by saying that they are standing up for the middle class, when in reality there is only one party that is standing up for Canada's middle class. It is this Prime Minister and it is the Liberal Party of Canada.

Mr. Randy Hoback: What colour is the sky in your world? What does la-la land really look like?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member opposite can explain the hypocrisy that seems to be among the Conservative Party when it comes to taxation policy.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the member for Prince Albert that I am sure that his colleague, who is going to have the floor in a couple of minutes, is very well able to answer the questions that the parliamentary secretary just asked. I would ask him to hold back on any comments or questions he may have during that time.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I truly have missed the member for Winnipeg North over this long break. His interventions are such a source of amusement.

Government Orders

He talked about the Canada child care benefit. The Liberals changed the name of the universal child care benefit. They finally realized that parents were not going to use this money for beer and popcorn, which was progress for them. They had previously said not to give money to parents, because they will use it for beer and popcorn. On this issue at least, the Liberals came around to our way of thinking to some extent, but they have a lot further to go to come around to our way of thinking.

What they did at the beginning was put forward a proposal that made various changes to tax rates. The same measure also reduced the amount that Canadians could put aside in a tax-free savings account, which we know statistically is the preferred savings vehicle for Canadians who are in the middle class and for those working hard to join it. Canadians are struggling to get ahead and want to get ahead, yet they face more and higher taxes from the government. However, we can tell from the rhetoric of the member that the Liberals do not want to admit it.

Every time they try to increase our taxes, they try to do it in a way that is as surreptitious as possible. They want to change the deductions so that a person would have to pay more on benefits received in the workplace. They want to impose a carbon tax to increase the cost of everything we buy, without being transparent about the cost. They black out the information about how much the carbon tax costs. It is the carbon tax cover-up.

I say this to the member across the way: If he is actually proud of his approach to taxing Canadians, then will he end the carbon tax cover-up and tell Canadians how much it will actually cost them?

• (1550)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, on my 400th intervention in this Parliament, I just want to say how much of an honour it is to rise in this new place that we will call home for the next 10 years.

I had the opportunity to listen to this member from the beginning of his speech. He started it off quite a while ago by talking about failures and the failures of this government, but by his measure, when we look at this, we see that Canada now leads the G7 in terms of economic growth. We have the lowest unemployment that we have ever had since we started recording it. How is it possible that a Conservative member would judge that record and say that it is a failure? I just do not understand it.

Can the member explain what he means when he talks about a failure, in light of the fact that we have had the best growth that this country has had in a long time and that we have the lowest unemployment rate since we started recording it?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, under the Conservatives, at the time of the last election Canada had the lowest unemployment, the highest rate of growth, the best job creation record in the G7 and a balanced budget. We were able to deliver the goods with a balanced budget.

My colleague across the way is laughing. Let me tell members this: His constituents are not laughing, because they are struggling to get ahead. They know that the out-of-control deficit spending by the government will mean higher taxes for them. It is already meaning higher taxes and it is going to lead to further higher taxes.

If the member cares about how much his constituents pay, I wonder if he will commit to the government's not raising the carbon tax after the next election. We know that if it has a chance to raise the carbon tax, it will certainly do so. We have to stop it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to take a few seconds to say how pleased I am to be back here in this new place. I am very happy to see all the work that has been done over these past years to build this new House of Commons. I commend everyone who worked on it, because it is amazing. I hope that it will help us have useful discussions and debates that will benefit our constituents.

Today, we are examining a bill pertaining to the Federal Sustainable Development Act, and as the NDP environment critic, I am obviously very pleased to rise in the House to talk about sustainable development, the environment, ecology, the future and what we will leave our children.

We urged the government to be more transparent and engage in more intergovernmental coordination to ensure better planning and accountability with respect to sustainable development in Quebec and Canada. I believe that this is an approach to economic development that has unanimous support in Canada today. We would have liked to see Bill C-57 go further in some respects, but, at every step, the NDP supported the government's policy direction on this matter as well as the progress made on this bill.

We could have gone much further. For example, we would have liked to see the United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals included in this bill, which would have strengthened the federal government's commitment to those UN goals. It is unfortunate that they were not included. We suggested it, but the government declined.

Today, however, we need to debate and vote on the government motion in response to the three amendments proposed and adopted by the Senate. The government agrees with amendments 1 and 3 from the Senate, but it disagrees with amendment 2. That is the fly in the ointment. We in the NDP cannot understand the Liberal government's attitude. Let us look at what amendment 2 says:

2. Clause 8, page 5: Add the following after line 30:

“10.2 Performance-based contracts with the Government of Canada, including employment contracts, shall, where applicable, include provisions for meeting the applicable goals and targets referred to in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and any applicable strategy developed under section 11.”.

The Senate is basically suggesting that federal government contracts awarded to companies and subcontractors take into account the goals and targets of the federal sustainable development strategy. This is something I do not say very often in the House, but I agree with the Senate. The representatives of the upper house have made an excellent suggestion.

Government Orders

The NDP does not understand why the government disagrees with Senate amendment 2 in its motion. Why does the Liberal government want to prevent the contracts in question from having to meet the objectives of the federal sustainable development strategy? How will that help build a greener country that is more respectful of future generations and our ecosystems?

It would not have cost the Liberal government very much to be consistent and agree to the Senate's amendment. It would not cost anything to require that contracts comply with a framework set out in the national sustainable development strategy, which includes certain objectives and principles. Why does the government want to sidestep that requirement? It seems as though the government is giving itself some wriggle room, creating a grey area so it can do what it wants when it awards contracts.

● (1555)

The NDP opposes the government's motion because it rejects that amendment, which seems completely reasonable, coherent and consistent with a comprehensive vision of sustainable development.

There is a lot to say about the Liberal government's coherent and ambitious vision for the environment. This is such an important issue for all Canadians, their children and their grandchildren, but we are once again dealing with a government that says one thing and does the opposite. The government's hypocrisy, its Jekyll-and-Hyde approach, is completely mind-boggling.

In December, I went to Poland for COP24, a major gathering of the United Nations focusing on the rules for implementing the Paris Agreement. I attended a number of meetings and round tables.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change delivered a speech to the delegates at the plenary hall in Katowice. There were 20,000 people there from about 185 countries, and not just government representatives. There were also people representing unions, businesses, investors and environmental groups. The Minister of Environment delivered an absolutely outstanding speech. I was there, I heard the speech, and I applauded along with everyone else. I applauded out of politeness, but also because the speech was very good. The speech laid out a vision that New Democrats and most environmentalists can get on board with. I myself would have wholeheartedly endorsed the text.

The problem is that the Liberal government's decisions have nothing whatsoever to do with what was said in the speech. On the international stage, they are all about making themselves look good, patting themselves on the back and saying all the right things, but there is a lot they are hiding and would rather not talk about. That hypocrisy is a real shame. There are countless examples of how the government says one thing but does the opposite.

A report was presented at COP24 assessing the performance of the 60 richest, most industrialized nations—and obviously that includes Canada—when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. People in Canada often like to brag about our strong performance in various areas. For instance, Canada ranks pretty high on the United Nations human development index. Where does Canada rank in terms of greenhouse gas reductions? Canada ranks 54th out of 60 countries. That is nothing to be proud of. The Liberal

government does not keep its promises, and greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.

I actually just read an interesting statistic. The only year in which greenhouse gas emissions decreased in Canada was 2008, and that was because of the economic crisis and recession. Every other year, greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise inexorably. We are getting further away from our targets. Let us move forward together, and not fall backwards.

In 2030, we are supposed to have reduced our greenhouse gas emissions to 517 megatonnes. That is our target. The Liberal government did not make much of an effort considering that was the Harper government's target. The Liberal government simply copied the targets set by the government of Stephen Harper, known friend of the environment and ecosystems. The Liberals are so ambitious that they decided to adopt the same target as the previous government and they are not even going to reach that.

According to the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, we are going to miss the 2020 and 2030 targets. Every year we see the gap between our achievements and our targets getting ever wider.

● (1600)

According to the December 2017 report, if the Liberal government continues down the same path, it will fall 66 megatonnes short of the target. It will fail to meet the Harper government's target by 66 megatonnes.

What did we learn from the December 2018 report a few weeks before Christmas? We learned that we will fall 79 megatonnes short. That is 13 megatonnes more than what was predicted in 2017.

As the years go by, we are falling further behind our 2030 target. Instead of moving forward, we are moving backwards. The Liberal government's results continue to fall further and further behind the Conservative target for greenhouse gas emission reductions. The Liberal government's performance is really nothing to be proud of. Despite its claims, the government does not seem to realize the urgency of the situation.

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, quoted the IPCC, which submitted a truly exceptional report last year. He told us that we have 12 years to act; we have 12 years before it is too late.

After that, we will not be able to stop or fix global warming and climate destabilization. This will lead to some massive environmental crises. Climate refugees will have to leave their homes, their communities or islands. These islands will be swept into the ocean because we were unable to take action and we did not take global warming and climate destabilization seriously, even though they are the greatest challenge of our generation. It is absolutely catastrophic.

Failures like the ones at COP24 are worrisome. Sure, some progress was made to encourage countries to be transparent, to share information about their greenhouse gas reduction plans and to compare these plans.

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However, we all know that we will not be able to meet the Paris target to avoid a 2°C rise in temperature with the existing plans some countries have put forward. The target was to have just a 1.5°C rise in temperature. We will not reach the 1.5°C target or 2°C target with the plans and strategies that have been put forward by western countries and the major developing countries.

There were discussions in Katowice about setting more ambitious targets. They focused on recognizing how, even if we manage to meet our targets, it will not be enough and how we need to be more ambitious. Rather than reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to 517 megatonnes by 2030, Canada may need to consider reducing them to 490 or 480 megatonnes.

We need to make a decision about what to do. If we do not and we stick with the work plans that are on the table right now, the earth's temperature could increase by 3°C or 4°C by 2050. That would be catastrophic in many respects. It would result in natural disasters, such as droughts, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and forest fires. Last summer, British Columbia experienced more forest fires and bigger forest fires than it has in years. Montreal had a heat wave. It was 35°C in Montreal and people died because it was too hot and their bodies could not cope with the heat. This sort of thing is going to happen more and more often. Our targets are not good enough to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. They are not good enough to prevent global catastrophe and climate deregulation that will lead to human suffering, displaced populations, war and reduced economic prosperity.

We will not meet our targets, and we cannot even acknowledge that we should have aimed higher and seen the bigger picture, that we need to take responsibility.

Aurélien Barrau is a French astrophysicist I really like. He is the kind of scientist who sometimes dives into these discussions because he feels that, as a scientist, he has a duty to get involved and sound the alarm. A few months ago, he delivered an absolutely brilliant talk that is available on the Internet. He talked about how global warming is a threat to life as we know it.

• (1605)

In a recent interview on French television, Mr. Barrau said something I found devastating but true: a few years from now, our children will view us as criminals. That really got me thinking. Many of us here and at home have children and grandchildren or have friends who do. I would not want my sons and daughters to be going through hard times a few years from now and blaming us because we failed to step up, do the right thing, and make the green transition happen when it needed to happen. That time is now. We have 12 years.

Humanity faces no greater challenge than the fight against climate change. It will take a monumental effort to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Rather than put in that effort, what has the Liberal government done besides making fine speeches at international conferences? It bought a pipeline. It took \$4.5 billion of our money and bought a leaky 65-year-old pipeline so it could triple oil production, which also means more greenhouse gas emissions. We are going backwards.

If we have the money to buy a pipeline, could we not use it to invest in renewable energy instead and create jobs for the many communities that need them? Renewable energy is not just the way of the future, it is the way to prosperity. It means jobs for today and tomorrow. Kinder Morgan thought it was too risky to hang onto the Trans Mountain pipeline, so it decided to sell it, but it could not find a buyer. Not one private company wanted to buy it, because of the multiple risks involved. Then along came the Liberal government. It decided to drop \$4.5 billion of our money on a pipeline no one wanted, and then it decided to spend \$7.4 billion to triple oil production and make the pipeline even bigger.

This pipeline crosses 800 rivers and waterways in British Columbia. Today we have learned that it is going to endanger a threatened species, the southern resident killer whales. The team that made a submission to the National Energy Board wrote that, because of marine shipping, the project is going to have significant adverse effects on the ecosystem and habitat of the killer whales. That is understandable, since tanker traffic will increase by 700%.

The government is spending money to say it is going to protect our oceans and the B.C. coast, but at the same time it buys a pipeline that will increase marine traffic, endangering a species that is already threatened. As for the coast, the oil we are talking about is heavy oil. In the event of an oil spill in a river, a lake or the ocean, which would be even worse, no one knows exactly how that type of oil will behave. There is a good chance that after a certain period of time the oil will sink to the bottom, and it will be nearly impossible to clean it up. These are important factors.

Last November, an Equiterre report gave us some insight into this government's choices. The Liberal government is investing 12 times as much money in the oil and gas sector as it is in renewable energy. We propose doing the opposite, investing in solar, wind, tidal and geothermal energy, as well as in electric cars, to change the way we think about the economy so that we have a new clean, green economy that will create good jobs for Canadians.

Export Development Canada alone gives at least \$10 billion to the oil and gas sector. Last year, it was more than \$10 billion, since we have to include the \$4.5 billion that was invested in the purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline.

We have a collective responsibility that goes beyond the re-election of a government or an MP. We have to have the courage to do things differently and make the shift that we have been slow to make here. That is why 300,000 people signed the Pact for the Transition and have decided to make an effort. They will compost and recycle their waste and eat less meat, for example. Why is the Liberal government unable to follow the public's example and make the right decisions for the future?

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•(1610)

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we have had the opportunity this morning and this afternoon to listen to interventions from both the Conservative Party and the New Democrats on this particular piece of legislation as it relates to sustainability. We witnessed that the Conservatives talk only about the economy. That is the only thing that matters. They never really mention the environment. We see from the NDP only discussion about the environment, never talking about the economy.

I spoke in the emergency debate that we had on the intergovernmental report on climate change, and I cannot recall if that member was here. It was a passionate discussion.

I think we can all come to the conclusion that, if we are going to be successful at this, it will be in a way that will not jeopardize our economy. Based on everything that has come from the NDP, it sounds as if it would jeopardize the economy if it means trying to get this right, but in reality that would only put us back and not advance the issue forward.

I wonder if the member could at least comment on whether he thinks it is important to bring these two issues together.

•(1615)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, but I do not think he listened to my whole speech. I talked about jobs, for today and tomorrow, at least 12 times.

All reports and estimates show that millions of jobs in sustainable development and renewable energy will be created around the world. By investing in fossil fuels, we are failing to remain competitive with other countries. We could be leaders in certain areas of expertise and create jobs for Canadians, but we are failing miserably. This is what the Liberal government does not understand. It insists on investing in yesterday's energy sources, when we want to invest in the energy sources and jobs of tomorrow.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, one of the problems with the New Democratic Party is that it seems to send inconsistent messages. Let me give a tangible example. The NDP government in Alberta supports many of the issues related to the expansion of pipelines, taking into consideration indigenous people, the environment and the different stakeholders. The Alberta NDP government supports that.

The LNG in British Columbia is the biggest private sector-government investment that we have seen in the history of Canada. Svend Robinson, a prominent New Democrat, says it is a bad idea. The NDP leader says it is a good idea. It seems to me that the NDP does not know what to say about the environment, especially if it happens to be in government in Alberta or B.C.

Where is the consistency? Is Jagmeet right or is Jagmeet wrong? Canadians would like to know, in regard to the LNG. I think they would also like to know his thoughts about British Columbia versus Rachel Notley.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Jagmeet Singh is coming here, Madam Speaker. That is one thing I know.

[Translation]

I thank the parliamentary secretary for his question.

The New Democrats have always strongly supported workers, while still being environmentally and ecologically responsible. The Liberals get all worked up and cry about how we need to save the planet and how it would be catastrophic to do nothing, but they do nothing. All they have done is invest more in the oil and gas sector, buy an old pipeline and triple oil production. They managed this file so poorly that the courts quashed the project. They are not able to move forward, primarily because they did not respect indigenous communities and their rights. It is ironic that the parliamentary secretary brought this up, since they have been so incompetent with Trans Mountain that the courts stopped the project.

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie for his activism in fighting for the environment and the economy.

What is clear in this debate is that the Liberals cannot manage the environment or the economy. The example that the member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie cites is very striking.

We have a government that is willing to splurge \$15 billion for the Trans Mountain pipeline, which is a money-losing pipeline that they tried to pretend was actually earning money. This leads to a net job loss in British Columbia because of the closure of the Parkland refinery as a result of the Trans Mountain pipeline. Therefore, we are talking about net job losses even before we talk about the threat this project represents to the fishery and tourism industries in British Columbia. It is threatening thousands of jobs.

We have a Liberal government that cannot manage the environment, is incapable of fighting back against climate change and at the same time has made a complete and utter mess of any sort of economic basis for the Trans Mountain pipeline.

Does my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie feel that the Liberals have in any way managed effectively either the environment or the economy?

•(1620)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question. I do not believe he will be surprised to hear me say that the Liberals have done a very poor job of managing environmental and economic issues, especially the taxation file.

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We were told that they would abolish the loopholes for CEOs, which cost us hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Four years later, the loopholes are still there. We were told that it was unacceptable for people to put money in tax havens because they are not paying their fair share of taxes. However, new tax agreements were signed with more tax havens. We were told that major corporations must contribute. Do Netflix and other web giants pay taxes? No. When it comes to taxation, the Liberals have failed miserably.

As for environmental stewardship, it is nothing but words. You would think you were listening to Dalida. It is rather ironic, but absolutely nothing has changed. As my colleague from British Columbia mentioned, it is true that purchasing the Trans Mountain project has caused job losses. Moreover, as environmentalist Mike Pearson pointed out, some habitats, such as salmon habitats, are already at risk or have been destroyed. He stated that during the preliminary work, and even before the project was blocked by the court, salmon habitats had already been damaged or destroyed because of this government's decisions.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Madam Speaker, let us come back to amendment 2 made by the Senate, which the government rejects and the NDP supports.

Imagine that I am the Government of Canada and that I want to award contracts for major projects. It seems to me that I would have the upper hand. It would be pretty easy to award the contract to the lowest bidder, but I could also decide to award it to the bidder who offers the best chances of achieving our greenhouse gas emissions targets.

Why does the government not make the most of this advantageous position to promote environmental protection in order to eventually reach the targets we hope to achieve?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I am not an inspector, investigator, or police officer, but I know the old question: who profits from crime? Why is there some sort of loophole? Why would we allow those who sign contracts with the government to get around the criteria for achieving the objectives of the national sustainable development strategy?

It is only logical for those people to have the same obligations as the rest of us so that we can all move together in the same direction. However, that is not the case. It seems like the government is giving companies and subcontractors a gift, some sort of free pass. It is not like me to say that, but the Senate is telling us that this needs to be included in the bill. A simple amendment to section 10.2 would ensure that all companies involved are subject to the same obligations, which would prevent any one subcontractor or company from having a competitive edge. They would all be required to move in the same direction and meet the criteria under this government's sustainable development strategy.

Why are the Liberals not doing that? It makes no sense.

* * *

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am rising to confirm that tomorrow, Tuesday, January 29, shall be an allotted day.

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act.

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand in our new chamber to speak to Bill C-57 and to continue to represent the people of Whitby, who have graciously allowed me to be here and who I know are very interested in the environment and issues that relate to the sustainable development goals.

I be splitting my time with the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

The bill responds to a number of recommendations from the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. I would like to thank the committee members in this place and the other place for ensuring we have legislation that focuses on ensuring increased accountability by departments and agencies for setting and achieving a very ambitious sustainable development target, one that promotes close collaboration with all agencies through a whole-of-government approach. It sets a higher bar with respect to transparency, with improved reporting, oversight and continued conversations with indigenous peoples and individuals right across Canada to respect diversity and gender parity. It provides improvements through our robust and wholesome look at a federal sustainable development strategy, ensuring it incorporates the different views of Canadians across our country.

We have released the draft 2019-2022 federal sustainable development strategy. It is open for comment by Canadians until April 2. We want Canadians to help make the strategy stronger, so I would invite individuals to provide their commentary on that. The sustainable development goals data hub is on the Statistics Canada website.

I get a lot of questions from young people. Millennial kids, for example, email me and are seized with what we are doing as a government to ensure we keep on top of our commitments around sustainable development, particularly the environment, and to ensure we leave a world that is better for them, our children and grandchildren.

I happened to be part of the delegation that went to the UN last year with the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, at which Canada gave its voluntary national review on sustainable development. It was a great moment for Canada to be there to express its commitment to a whole-of-government approach to sustainable development.

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Today we are talking about the amendments that came from the other place. We accepted amendments 1 and 3. I know that other colleagues have questioned why our government did not accept amendment 2 to have incorporated in some of the contracts the sustainable development goals and targets. We have not supported this amendment because it goes beyond the policy intent of the legislation, which purpose is to make decision-making related to sustainable development more transparent and subject to accountability to Parliament.

I want to reference the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and member of Parliament for Central Nova. Last year, he spoke to the legislation quite passionately. In his comments on amendment 2, he spoke to the 2018 report, a progress report that shows that we are on target to meet many of the targets set forth in the 2016-2019 development strategy. In particular, in December 2017, he spoke to the fact that almost 8% of coastal marine areas were being conserved or were on track to reach our target of 10% by 2020.

• (1625)

He also referenced reducing greenhouse gas emissions from federal government buildings and fleets. We have achieved a 28% reduction in GHG emissions relative to 2005, more than half way to our target of 40% by 2030. The progress report highlights that we are well on our way to achieving this target. When we talk about protecting terrestrial areas and inland waters, we are not moving fast enough. Through having a whole-of-government approach and legislation that focuses on ensuring we are measuring those targets, we are able to see where we are doing well.

I mentioned our marine and government approach to reducing GHGs and where we could improve. We saw that we were not moving fast enough to protect our terrestrial and inland waters. Therefore, in budget 2018, we invested \$1.3 billion in biodiversity and conservation to help us bolster that target and ensure we keep on track.

I would like to outline some of our government's accomplishments. We have heard others in this place talk about what we have done on the environment and our environmental stewardship, as well as putting a price on pollution, our insistence that polluters pay for the damage they do to our country. However, more important, we cannot just look at climate change in a silo.

One of the principles of the legislation is to ensure there is a whole-of-government approach. We have taken initiatives to ensure that climate change does not negatively or disproportionately impact individuals in our society who may not have a lot of means. We introduced Canada's first-ever poverty reduction strategy. That is built upon previous investments from the Canada child benefit, our national housing strategy, our public transit investments and our investments in the Canada workers benefit. We know that individuals who are working to become part of the middle class tend to be more negatively impacted by climate change, so we have to put in buffers. We have to put in place the means to ensure those individuals are well protected.

We know women and children are often the first to feel the brunt of the impact of climate change. We have a strategy around gender equality, ensuring we are looking at the legislation that comes before

us through a gender lens and ensuring that women are given the opportunities they need to thrive in Canada and do so successfully.

For our indigenous population, we are working toward ensuring long-term water advisories are lifted by March of 2021. We are well on our way to doing that.

A number of initiatives need to be put in place to ensure we are not looking at the impacts of climate change in a silo. We have taken leadership around ensuring our climate plan is secure. However, we have also put forward different initiatives to ensure all Canadians, no matter their means, no matter their diversity, are able to have a sustainable future in our country. While we look to protect our environment, we also need to have the capacity to grow our economy and have good, well-paying jobs not just now but in the future.

• (1630)

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Federal Sustainable Development Act actually articulates a policy, a principle, of intergenerational equity. Effectively, intergenerational equity is that we do not deprive future generations of prosperity and wholeness by spending money wildly for the current needs of the nation. Intergenerational equity is about understanding that future generations have a right to supply and serve their own needs without a burden being imposed upon them by previous generations. However, we have seen the government embark upon huge deficits, when it promised small deficits. The Liberals promised that they were going to balance the budget. They have now said that no, they are not going to balance the budget by 2019 as promised. They are going to do it in 2040, and by doing so they will impose a tax burden and a debt burden on future generations.

How does the member square her government's performance on this file, an appalling performance, with the intergenerational equity principle articulated in the Federal Sustainable Development Act?

• (1635)

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Madam Speaker, if nothing was more important to the Conservative members, they would understand that climate change is real. It impacts our generation now and will impact future generations. If we do not take it seriously, they will be living with the repercussions of our inaction. If the Conservatives were really taking this question seriously, they would have a plan. For 200-plus days they have said that they would have a plan, but they do not.

When it comes to looking after our children and grandchildren, we have put in place a number of initiatives, including a price on pollution to ensure that polluters pay, looking at a national poverty strategy to ensure that we are lifting children out of poverty with our CCB and ensuring that we have a plan that is comprehensive, holistic and whole-of-government and allows our children and grandchildren to have a prosperous future in this country.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

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I could talk about how the Liberal government will miss its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, but I will talk about the government's motion.

The Liberals agreed to Senate amendments 1 and 3, but they rejected amendment 2, in which the Senate suggested that federal government contracts should adhere to the targets in the federal sustainable development strategy.

Why is the Liberal government refusing to ensure that such contracts include provisions related to its own federal sustainable development strategy? I do not understand.

[*English*]

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned, we accepted amendments one and three. We rejected amendment two, because it fell outside the policy intent of this particular piece of legislation.

This particular piece of legislation is to ensure that across governments, through a whole-of-government approach, we have a collaborative and coordinated effort toward improved oversight and reporting and continued conversations with indigenous people and Canadians about how to ensure that our strategy is robust and will look to improve the lives of Canadians now and in the future. It has increased accountability for departments and agencies in setting and achieving very ambitious sustainable development targets and ensures that we have leadership and can reach our goals.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to be back in the House of Commons. I am especially pleased to have the privilege of speaking in this new chamber.

I rise today to speak to the Senate's amendments to Bill C-57, an act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act. I want to thank the hon. senators for their time and efforts in reviewing this bill.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide a brief overview of how this bill aligns with the government's commitments around delivering real results, pursuing goals with a renewed sense of collaboration, and setting a higher bar for transparency. I will continue with a discussion of the amendments adopted by the Senate.

This bill is a reflection of the Government of Canada's commitment to sustainable development and safeguarding the interests of future generations. We all want a sustainable future for Canada, for our children and for our grandchildren. This bill clearly shows that sustainable development and the environment are at the forefront of government decision making.

This bill ensures that federal organizations bound by the act contribute to the development of federal sustainable development strategies and progress reports. In developing sustainable development strategies, federal organizations are to consider a number of principles, including the principle of intergenerational equity.

The bill indicates that targets must be measurable and include a time frame. That and the inclusion of the principle of results and delivery will help MPs, senators and the general public to keep track

of the government's progress in meeting the goals and targets set out in each strategy every three years. This would incorporate the government's strong focus on results into legislation.

The federal sustainable development strategy and its progress reports are a collaborative effort involving many departments and agencies. Bill C-57 would contribute to an integrated, whole-of-government view of activities supporting environmental sustainability. One way in which this would be achieved is by extending the Federal Sustainable Development Act's coverage to over 90 federal organizations and enable further expansion of coverage over time.

The sustainable development strategies developed by these federal organizations will support the Federal Sustainable Development Act's commitment to make environmental decision-making more transparent and accountable to Parliament.

Going forward, parliamentarians and relevant standing committees in both houses would have a greater ability to hold the government accountable for these sustainable development goals and targets. This would give committees a comprehensive view of what government organizations are doing with respect to sustainable development and the results achieved.

This bill received strong support from all parties of the House of Commons, where it was unanimously passed, and I hope that it will continue to be fully supported in the message we will send to the Senate.

I would now like to talk about the Senate's amendments.

First, the Senate agreed to some consequential amendments to bring the Auditor General Act in line with the changes made to the Federal Sustainable Development Act in Bill C-57. This reaffirms the commissioner's role under the Federal Sustainable Development Act and is supported by the government.

A second amendment was made to broaden the mandate of the Sustainable Development Advisory Council and not limit its advice on sustainable development matters to issues referred to it by the Minister of the Environment. Prior to this amendment, the bill stated that council members were to advise the minister on any matter related to sustainable development that is referred to the council by the minister. It is standard practice for ministerial advisory councils to provide advice on issues referred to them by the minister in charge. Defining the mandate of the Sustainable Development Advisory Council within the bill was meant to set clear parameters of its work. Although this amendment goes beyond our original intent, the government can accept it.

• (1640)

The third amendment would reinsert a section of the act that was removed. The current wording of the act stipulates that performance-based contracts with the Government of Canada must include provisions for meeting the applicable goals and targets referred to in the federal sustainable development strategy and the departmental sustainable development strategies.

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It is the government's view that this section pertains to procurement. The alignment of procurement to environmental objectives is already included in the Treasury Board's policy on green procurement, and that is why the government decided to repeal that section.

Also, Bill C-57 introduces section 10.1, which states that the Treasury Board may establish policies or issue directives applicable to designated entities governed by the Federal Sustainable Development Act in relation to the sustainable development impact of their operations. This explicitly recognizes the Treasury Board's role with respect to the impact of government operations on sustainable development.

On top of the fact that it is not appropriate to reinsert this section as written, the amendment further specifies that performance-based contracts include employment contracts and that they should include provisions for meeting the applicable goals and targets referred to in the federal sustainable development strategy as well as any applicable strategy developed under section 11.

The government does not support this amendment as this bill is not the appropriate legislation to prescribe what should be in employment contracts. Employment contracts are not easily defined, given their broad and wide-ranging nature. Moreover, this change is beyond the policy intent of a bill whose purpose is to make decision-making related to sustainable development more transparent and subject to accountability to Parliament.

Given all the provisions in the bill that strengthen other accountability measures, including identifying a minister responsible for each target in the federal sustainable development strategy, and explicitly indicating that the Treasury Board Secretariat may establish policies or issue directives applicable to one or more departments in relation to the sustainable development impact of their operations, the government does not see the benefit of this amendment.

The additional transparency and oversight measures included in this bill will provide enhanced accountability measures for the results achieved. That is why I agree with the minister and I support sending a message to the Senate agreeing with two amendments and disagreeing with the change to clause 8.

Madam Speaker, I welcome the debate on this amendment and your decision.

• (1645)

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, since we are talking about sustainable development and Canada's environment, I am wondering if my colleague opposite can tell us what price elasticity assumptions the government used in calculating its carbon tax and by how much it will reduce Canada's emissions by the end of this year. I would also like her to talk about how that compares to the opportunity costs many Canadians are incurring by taking on a carbon tax that does nothing to reduce Canada's emissions but makes their lives more expensive. As well, can she explain to Canadians why she thinks it is fair that Canadians should pay for the mistakes of this Prime Minister?

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question.

I am sure she knows that I am from Quebec. The price on pollution in Quebec is widely accepted and has been in place for a long time now. People do not understand why we are not going even further in that respect.

I am back in the House after spending six weeks in my riding. The environment is probably the biggest issue people are talking about. What can we do to go even further, to help our children and grandchildren? The member surely knows that I used to be a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade. We held consultations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The number one concern for people in the Far North is the fact that climate change is already happening. We really need to do even more.

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I do not want to interpret her comments, and that is why I am asking my question. According to her explanation, Senate amendment 5 was rejected by the government because it did not reference the right act.

My question is very simple. Does the member accept the spirit of this amendment? Does the government agree with the spirit and is it simply saying that it is not in the right act?

If that is the case, in what legislation will it be included to ensure it becomes an integral part of the progress we want to make in fighting climate change?

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague. I am glad to see he was really listening.

The reason we do not need to go further is that it is already included in the procurement harmonization.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am sure my colleague is aware of the announcement made last week by the Leader of the Opposition to the effect that the Conservative government's primary objective would be to stop pollutants from being dumped in our waterways. That is a clear commitment for Canada's environment.

The member said earlier that the carbon tax would likely go up. Can she give us any details? Just how high will the Liberal carbon tax go if, heaven forbid, those folks over there are re-elected in a year?

• (1650)

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable colleague. I see that he is not very well rested after spending six weeks in his riding. I find him to be a little off.

Quebeckers believe that we must fight climate change and put a price on pollution. My colleague is from Quebec and has known for a long time that we are already environmentally conscious and that we want to go further, just like British Columbia.

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I know he cannot answer this question, but I would like to know whether the Conservative Party has a plan to fight climate change. I have not seen one yet and there is nothing forthcoming. I am thinking of my children and my granddaughter.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say, but he cannot ask me any more questions.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The member for Louis-Saint-Laurent had the opportunity to ask a question. He will have to wait for another opportunity, if one presents itself, to ask another question.

It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, Health; the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, International Trade; and the hon. member for Essex, International Trade.

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased today to stand in the House to talk about sustainable development and Canada's environment and to point out the vast swath of hypocrisy that the government has undertaken in its time in office. Regardless of political stripe, regardless of where someone is in terms of environmental policy in this country, everyone agrees that the Liberals in this Parliament have a woeful and inept track record of doing anything for Canada's environment.

Let us start with the carbon tax. A colleague from the Liberal caucus just stood and said that the carbon tax should be higher. She said that in response to a question I asked about whether a carbon tax would actually do anything to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada.

Why did she try to spin that question and show the Liberals' true agenda? It is because we know the carbon tax that Justin Trudeau has put in place on Canadians will do nothing—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the member she is not to mention, during her speech, individuals' names who are sitting in the House.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: It is the new environment, Madam Speaker. One gets very excited about the carbon tax and fighting it and fighting the perpetrator of the carbon tax. I hope Canadians will forgive me for that. It was a slip of the tongue.

The carbon tax has been imposed by the disastrous Liberal Prime Minister. Canadians have to pay for his mistake of putting in place a carbon tax and not reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Let me explain this.

If somebody in Canada wants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, that individual has to first realize that Canada has an agricultural-based economy. We also have a natural resource-based economy and a manufacturing-based economy. All of these industries are carbon intensive. They take energy to run. It is cold here in Ottawa. Just taking a few short steps outside the House of Commons today makes one realize that we need energy to heat our buildings in the middle of January.

The reality is that many Canadians have to drive to work. Canada does not have the same sort of public transit infrastructure that a

small European country has. When we put all of those things together and look at the economic context of Canada, we understand that the price the Prime Minister has put on carbon will do nothing to change the demand for carbon.

People who have to drive to work in downtown Calgary from my riding of Calgary Nose Hill, after the disastrous failure to build the green line in my riding that my former government committed to, need to fill up their cars. They do not really have a choice of how to commute to work. The price of gas does not matter as they have to put gas in their cars. If it is more expensive, that means more money coming out of their pockets. The only way they can change their behaviour is by saying it is no longer affordable for them to drive to work. In that case we would see an economic reduction instead of what the Liberals always talk about, which is growing Canada's economy and balancing the environment.

Under our former Conservative government we saw for the first time in Canadian history a decoupling of economic growth. We saw the economy grow and greenhouse gas emissions drop. Why was that? It was because we told each of the major emitting sectors in Canada that we would put regulations in place such that they would have to adapt to a lower carbon emitting standard over time. That resulted in a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions with respect to passenger vehicles and the coal-fired electricity sector. All those regulations were put in place under the Conservative government.

The carbon tax is just a consumption tax. It is like the Liberals have added another GST to Canada's economy. It is not going to do anything to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As somebody who cares about this issue, it is so devastating for me to watch their uninformed environment minister be completely unaware of any of the realities of the failed economic model of this situation.

My colleague who just made a speech spoke to their hidden agenda. She said the carbon tax is not high enough and that we need to make it higher. Anybody who watches the Liberal government knows that it cannot resist raising a tax. Anybody who thinks that the carbon tax is bad now, should know that it is going to go up.

The government has no plan on how to grow the economy. It only has a plan to build a deficit. What does that mean? Today's deficit is tomorrow's taxes. We have a carbon tax that is not going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we have huge growing deficits. For the amount of money that the Liberal government has spent on nothing that has materially impacted the lives of Canadians in a positive way, we could have sent a gold-plated rocket ship to the moon.

● (1655)

Canadians do not see anything for these deficits, but they will see increased taxes. Canadians are tired of paying for the Prime Minister's ego, his love for himself and his failed policies. That is why we cannot trust Liberals on any sort of policy related to sustainable development, but I want to build on that case.

Government Orders

We know the carbon tax is a failure, but there is something even bigger in terms of hypocrisy. The government has done everything possible to undermine the workers in the energy sector and the industries that are part of the energy sector across this country. It has done everything possible to call their jobs dirty. The Prime Minister even said in Paris that he wished they could phase out the energy sector faster.

The people on this side of the aisle support transporting Canada's energy products in the most environmentally responsible way, which is pipelines. The Liberals across the aisle are content to let our energy products be transported by rail, which has both environmental implications and implications on our agriculture sector. They are saying they should use rail and not pipelines or they should shut the energy sector down, but at the same time, what are they doing?

Let us talk about a pipeline, one of the few pipelines that the Liberal Party loves, and that is a pipeline of fecal matter. That is right. The same Liberal government that says it does not like pipelines got behind the former mayor of Quebec and approved the City of Montreal dumping billions of litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River.

People in the energy sector are told on a daily basis that their jobs are dirty and that pipelines are not environmentally sustainable. One has to appreciate the level of frustration and anger at the hypocrisy of the environment minister telling them their jobs are dirty and the government is working against pipelines. I believe her chief of staff made an entire career out of fighting pipelines. It is "no pipelines for the energy sector", but what did the Liberals do in their first months in office? On the minister's sixth day in office, when a top priority was to turn the lights on in the office, the environment minister approved a plan for the City of Montreal to dump billions of litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River. There are concerns about pipelines in Quebec, but not about fecal matter pipelines. Fecal matter pipelines are okay. Job-creating energy pipelines are not okay. That is sustainable development under the Liberal government.

It gets worse. I am not sure what other word I can use for "fecal matter" in the House that is parliamentary, but viewers at home can imagine and insert the word appropriately here. The Conservative government said we should not be developing a pipeline of fecal matter since there were a lot of concerns about fish habitat and the terrible precedent that this decision would create for the future. We wanted to ensure that all of the appropriate actions and research had been done and we actually named a panel to review the plan. In October of 2015, the former Conservative government mandated an independent science review panel to review the proposed discharge of the raw sewage of Montreal. This was a very important step.

What did the sustainable development-loving environment minister, the "Alberta has dirty jobs" environment minister, the "no energy pipeline" environment minister do on her sixth day in office? She said, "No Alberta pipelines, but Montreal can dump away. Dump all of that fecal matter into the river. We do not need a fish habitat. Dump it in. Set that precedent. That is great."

That is sustainable development under the Liberal government. We have a carbon tax that will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we have the Minister of Environment jetting around the world to climate action panels and cocktail receptions fully understanding that

the government is never going to meet its own self-imposed greenhouse gas emissions target.

• (1700)

At the same time, the environment minister calls the jobs of the people in my riding dirty, tells the rest of Canada that we cannot put in place energy infrastructure, which is one of the most sustainable ways to transport energy products around the world, and signs off on a plan that had no review to dump billions of litres of fecal matter into the St. Lawrence River. I wonder how baby beluga felt about that.

This is why the government has no credibility whatsoever on sustainable development. It is one of the areas where the New Democratic Party and the Conservative Party can actually unite and say that there is no credibility there. However, it is even worse, because rather than talking about policy, government members just stand up and frankly repeat falsehoods. They are trying to buy the votes of Canadians with their mumbo jumbo while at the same building pipelines of billions of litres of raw sewage.

I want people to visualize a full porta-potty after the end of a summer fair, then multiply that by one billion and dump that into the St. Lawrence River. That is what we are talking about. That is what the environment minister did on her sixth day in office, yet the jobs of the people in my riding are dirty and we should phase out the energy sector. Pardon me if I have some level of skepticism about the government's sustainable development plan.

I thought we could not possibly go into the lead-up to the federal election and not deal with the Montreal raw sewage issue. The Liberals could not possibly stand by this, yet they are. That is their sustainable development priority. I am so proud that the leader of my party stood up and said that a Conservative government would not allow this. It is not something we think is sustainable development.

I look at some of the things the government could have done over the last several years. In 2017, 250 billion litres of raw sewage was spilled or leaked into our waterways without being treated. This is the equivalent of 86,000 Olympic-size swimming pools. Again, we can try to visualize that in terms of the volume of a porta-potty. However, pipelines with energy projects are not okay. The Liberals would rather they not happen. For pipelines, which are subject to the most rigorous environment assessments in the world, no, we cannot do that, but 86,000 Olympic-size swimming pools full of fecal matter are good to go. That is the Liberal Party's sustainable development agenda.

Government Orders

In 2016, under the government's watch, only 159 out of 269 municipalities reported their sewage leaks. Why is the Liberal government not concerned about these missing reports? Why is the government not helping these municipalities upgrade their sewage infrastructure to ensure that no raw sewage is spilled into Canadian waters?

On this issue I am pleased to say that the former Conservative government set the stage in 2012 with the first wastewater regulations as a means of cleaning up 150 billion litres of untreated or under-treated wastewater or sewage that is dumped into waterways each year. Again, where is the Liberals' action on the environment? It is making Canadians pay for the Prime Minister's mistake, his failed legacy of any sort of environmental standard whatsoever, at the pump or on their tax bills.

A lot of Canadians are waking up to the hypocrisy of the government across a majority of issues. It is very exciting to see. I was able to travel across British Columbia this month. I travelled into some ridings, such as Cloverdale—Langley City. We had a town hall and about 250 people showed up. I thought it was going to be an interesting room. There was a Liberal member of Parliament there who won by a considerable majority. I heard people stand up in that room and say that they voted for the Prime Minister and he betrayed them.

This is why the Conservative Party is rolling out a plan of pragmatism. It is why we have opposed government bills like Bill C-69, the no-more-pipelines bill, which would do nothing to practically clean up the Canadian environment but would do everything to make it harder for Canadians to work on a daily basis.

• (1705)

That is where we have to wonder what the current government is managing to. If it is managing to taxing Canadians more but getting fewer results, what is in it for Canadians? Why do they have to pay for the Prime Minister's mistakes? What are the motives of every person across the aisle who votes in favour of these bills that do nothing to help the Canadian environment or the economy but make lives worse for Canadians? Why are they doing this? They could be doing it because they have not actually reviewed this legislation and are not doing their jobs. That could be one matter.

When I watch the Prime Minister and the environment minister and what their priorities are, such as going to Tedx conferences and different conferences around the world, where they are spouting their talking points to international audiences, as opposed to looking at home and doing their jobs here and then reporting back to the world on success, I wonder if it is more about their egos and seeking power for power's sake as opposed to doing something that actually matters.

Members do not have to take my word for it, although I would like it if they did. The reality is that the Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainable Development talked about some of these issues in his report this year. It is important to highlight this, because it talks about the fact that the measures to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions contained in the government's framework have yet to be implemented. That is on top of the carbon tax the government has put forward, which is probably going to do nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but is going to make Canadians

pay for the Prime Minister's mistakes. The report is quite shocking for a government that had an environment minister dressed up as a climate crusader for Halloween and put it on Twitter. One would think a climate crusader could get a better report from the environment and sustainable development commissioner than that.

I want to close with this. The Liberals can stand up, obfuscate and put all these pretty talking points forward. At the end of the day, their priority and track record has been a carbon tax that makes life more expensive for Canadians and does nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They have stymied energy infrastructure in this country and have prioritized billions of litres of fecal matter going into the St. Lawrence River.

• (1710)

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Madam Speaker, to begin, I would question the relevance of the member's entire submission on this point, given that we are debating the Senate amendments to Bill C-57, which she did not touch on.

In any event, she spent a good portion of her time on waste water. I would like to point out some of the inaccuracies throughout her speech. She indicated that the Conservatives took a regulatory approach. What they did not have was an infrastructure plan to allow municipalities to deal with their waste water problems, which we are doing right now.

She suggested that this whole side of the House is somehow opposed to the energy industry. Nothing could be further from the truth. I personally spent about five years working in the city of Calgary, the same city the member represents. I can tell her that this side of the House does have supporters of the sector who are working hard to ensure that we develop our resources in a responsible way.

When it comes to our plan to put a price on pollution, we have to start by saying that climate change is a problem. The Conservatives have yet to pitch a single idea for what they are going to do to address the threat posed by climate change.

On this side of the House, we do not think pollution should be free. We have sought the advice of the world's leading climate economists. They have all come back to the same point, which is that the most effective thing we can do to combat climate change is to put a price on pollution and return revenues to citizens. That is what we are doing.

My question to the member opposite is this. Why are she and the Leader of the Opposition committed to taking Doug Ford's approach to climate change and taking money from their constituents to make pollution free again?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned relevance. I think it is fairly relevant to the sustainable development of Canada to talk about billions of litres of fecal matter being poured into the St. Lawrence under the watch of the environment minister.

Government Orders

The member talked about infrastructure. The only infrastructure dollars that have been prioritized by the current government were for the infrastructure minister's office renovations at the front of this Parliament. Canadians have seen virtually no movement of the billions of dollars of deficit for infrastructure across this country. For a man to say that he worked in Calgary's energy sector and to then vote time and again on bills to support the Trans Mountain pipeline or to get energy workers back to work, we have one word for that in Calgary. That is "traitor".

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would ask the hon. member to ensure that she watches the words she uses in the House of Commons. There are words that should not be used in the House, and we need to be respectful of other members. We may not be in agreement as to what they are saying or what their positions are, but we should be very careful of the words being used.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I think we are starting to see where the Conservatives are going to be posturing themselves with rhetoric as we head into the next election. That is fair enough. They have a good reputation for talking about things that are full of fecal matter. Therefore, this is right up their alley.

The member referenced what the environment minister was forced to do six days after our government came into power. Why was the environment minister forced to do that? It was because in the preceding 10 years, there was absolutely no work done by the previous Conservative government with respect to building up the infrastructure so that the City of Montreal did not have to do what it had to do. It is quite simple. It is literally a pool of fecal matter, and it is a matter of whether we can properly process what is in there before it enters the St. Lawrence. If the proper infrastructure had been in place, the environment minister would not have had to do that six days after we came into government.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1715)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member is very capable of answering the question. I would ask all other members to hold their thoughts.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Madam Speaker, once again, I will point out the fact that the government has racked up so much deficit and has increased Canadian taxes and has done nothing for infrastructure in Canada. Under our former Conservative government, Canada's aged infrastructure was reduced significantly. We had huge investments in infrastructure under a balanced budget and the lowest federal tax burden in over 50 years. That is a concept the government has no idea of whatsoever.

The member can stand up and be glib about this, but the reality is that he is actually making excuses for Montreal dumping billions of litres of sewage into the St. Lawrence River. Now he is saying that they did not have a choice. If they actually cared about infrastructure, why did they approve this plan? I am not sure any scientist would

actually say that this was a great thing. Where was their infrastructure support? That is the problem.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Michelle Rempel: The government has had three years to do anything on any of these files, and it has done nothing except spend money and raise taxes, and now they have to account, because Canadians are tired of paying for the Prime Minister's mistakes and failed policies.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members again that when someone has the floor to be respectful. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands had the opportunity to ask his question, and I would ask him to allow the person who has the floor to have the opportunity to respond without being interrupted.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, when the Conservatives were in power, much to their credit, they brought back the eco-energy retrofit program, which was a great program that actually gave money to families or small businesses to retrofit their buildings so they could save on their energy bills. In fact, when I was on the public works committee, I actually brought forward the idea of looking at how much taxpayer money could be saved if the federal government invested in a major way in energy efficiency. In the end, we had a fabulous report, by the way, from a majority Conservative committee.

The Conservatives brought in this plan. It was over-subscribed. People loved it, and the Conservatives killed it. Why did they kill it? They wanted to bring down their deficit before the election.

Does the member not believe that a good initiative for sustainable development is to support Canadian families so they can do their part too and reduce their energy costs through a home energy retrofit program?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Madam Speaker, one of the primary responsibilities we have in this place is to be wise stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Unfortunately, that principle is sometimes lost on parties that are to the left of the Conservative Party of Canada. When we are in a deficit situation, we should be looking at ways to return the budget back to balance. This is something the Liberal government has no intention of doing. That is quite clear at this point in time.

When we look at the record, the words that I twiggled into with my colleague's question were doing things to help Canadian families make ends meet. I look at some of the things that none of the other parties in this place support, like common sense tax initiatives like income-splitting, that allowed people to value the labour of people who might have lower income in a relationship.

I think about all of those measures that many Canadians used to get by that were cancelled, that were not supported by any other party in this place. I will give the member's party credit. I think her former leader probably would have governed to the right of the Prime Minister. However, that said, nobody else here ever talks about balanced budgets or deficit. To me, that is walking away from the principle that we have for managing taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

Sometimes we have to talk about the fact that we have to live within our means, even in government. I am very proud to say that our government left Canadians with a balanced budget, the lowest federal tax burden in over 50 years, and that is a good thing.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, we keep hearing that the best way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is to put a price on pollution, what I like to call the Liberal carbon tax.

A two-year study in Quebec on the carbon exchange found that pricing pollution did not reduce greenhouse gas emissions in any way. In fact, a slight increase was observed.

I would like to hear the hon. member's thoughts on the fact that the Liberals want to tax people when the Quebec experience shows that the outcome is completely uncertain.

• (1720)

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Madam Speaker, the reality is that carbon in Canada is a good that is relatively inelastic. There is not a lot of substitute goods for it. Therefore, when the price of carbon is increased, we will not see a lot of behaviour changed, but we will see a restriction or a constriction on economic growth, as well as the ability of Canadians to make ends meet.

That is why this will not work, the \$40 price on carbon. One of my colleagues from Quebec boldly said that they really wanted to increase this tax. The government has not been able to show at what price behaviour would change in Canada and it has not been able to show when the carbon tax it has introduced would actually meet the emissions targets.

That is why the carbon tax is such a fallacy and it is something the Liberal government should be walking away from.

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PRIVILEGE

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to respond to the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for Perth—Wellington on December 11, 2018, with respect to an answer to an Order Paper question.

In his argument, the hon. opposition member argued that the government's response to Question No. 2001 was not a response and as such breached his capability to access information.

Question No. 2001 asked:

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With regard to the government's decision not to provide costs associated with legal assistance to Vice-Admiral Mark Norman: (a) who made the decision to deny legal assistance costs; (b) was the decision in (a) supported by the Minister of National Defence; (c) on what date was the decision in (a) made; and (d) which Ministers, exempt staff, or other government employees have or will receive taxpayer-funded legal assistance in relation to the case?

As mentioned by the hon. member, the response tabled stated:

With respect to legal assistance provide to specific individuals, a response could disclose personal and solicitor-client privileged information. Therefore the Government must respectfully decline to respond.

If we look at page 511 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, we will find the following quote:

...if a question to a Minister touches upon a matter that is *sub judice*, it is likely that the Minister will have more information than the Speaker concerning the matter and can determine whether answering the question may cause prejudice. The Minister may refuse to answer the question, as is his or her prerogative.

Consequently, Madam Speaker, I believe you will find that the response to the hon. member is perfectly acceptable, considering the circumstances surrounding Question No. 2001. As such, I respectfully submit that this is a question of debate and as such does not constitute a prima facie question of privilege.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I thank the member for the additional information that has been provided. We will take it under consideration and get back to the House with the decision.

* * *

FEDERAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion in relation to the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-57, An Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise to speak, whether in the chamber of our traditional House of Commons or the new chamber we are debating in today for the first time. When answering his first question, the Prime Minister commended all the individuals involved in making this transition possible and recognized the fine work and efforts that so many people have put in to realize the day that is finally upon us.

Having said that, I have listened to a few interesting speeches over the last number of hours on what is a very important principled piece of legislation. I would really encourage members of the Conservatives, as well as my New Democrat friends, to try to get a better understanding of what this legislation is all about. I have heard a wide range of debate. I will try to address the many different issues raised during the debate, but it covered a lot of territory, from taxation policy to immigration policy. There was a bit of stuff on the environment, as well as other issues.

Government Orders

I want to start by trying to express what many viewers might have been confused about with the previous speaker on what I believe is a very important issue, which is sustainability and the whole idea that when we move forward we need to look at sustainable development and establish those goals and objectives. When legislation empowers the right approach by the different stakeholders, the many different federal agencies that will all fall under this legislation, we need to recognize it as a positive piece of legislation, not only for the environment but also for Canada's economy.

I heard a great deal about Canada's economy and how it is performing. The Conservative opposition tries to give what I would argue is a false impression, as if the Canadian economy is not doing well. In fact, the numbers do not lie. The numbers are very much favourable over the last few years. We have seen progressive legislation brought in by this government. Some ideas have been generated from stakeholders, Paris and right through all regions of our country that understand the importance of the environment. We have been able to encapsulate the ideas that will push our economy forward, while at the same time recognize the importance of our environment.

I would suggest that the principle of working the environment and economy together is something this government understands. That is where I would like to start my comments on this legislation. We have the Conservatives, who are the official opposition, who tend to want to forget about the environment. They try to give the impression that the Harper government truly cared about the environment and had economic, legislative or budgetary policies to protect Canada's environment. In fact, not only did the former prime minister fail to meet the standards and expectations of Canadians with respect to the environment, the Conservatives did a poor job on the economy too.

When listening to the Conservatives talk about this legislation, whether today or back in November or December, one would think there has been no change and that Stephen Harper is still the leader of the Conservative opposition party.

• (1725)

It is interesting. Is it Stephen Harper? Some have made the suggestion today that it sounded more like Doug Ford was running the Conservative Party. Who is running the Conservative Party today? Is it Doug Ford? Is it Stephen Harper? Maybe it is Jason Kenney out in Alberta. Who is running the Conservative Party? When it comes to our environment, it is really difficult to tell.

The Conservative Party really has no plan. In one of the questions today, the Prime Minister said something like it has been 270 days and we are still waiting for that plan. Canadians deserve to see a plan. The Conservative Party has no plan.

I am going to talk about the Liberal plan very shortly, but before I do that, let me talk about my New Democrat friends. On the one hand, the Conservatives are very much focused on the economy. The environment really does not matter to them and they do not have a plan when it comes to the environment. My New Democrat friends, on the other hand, have a multitude of plans dealing with the environment. Everything is about the environment. Some would think they are trying to out-green the Green Party on environmental policies. They forget about the economy. It is hard to understand what the NDP's position is. After all, we have Jagmeet Singh saying

one thing, while another prominent New Democrat is saying another thing. We have the NDP here in Ottawa saying one thing, while the NDP provincial governments are saying something completely different.

What about the LNG project? It is a multi-billion dollar project. Every Canadian in every region is directly or indirectly going to benefit from the LNG investment. Every Canadian will derive some direct or indirect benefit from this multi-billion dollar investment. The New Democrat government in British Columbia and the government here in Ottawa have recognized the value of that development. However, now we have Svend Robinson, the prominent New Democrat who wants to be back inside the House, saying that it is a bad idea, and even going further in terms of wanting to shut down any sort of development of our natural resources.

The NDP here in Ottawa is saying that pipelines and the exportation of oil is a bad thing. If we listen to New Democrats speak in the House, we hear that they do not want to see any new pipelines at all. That seems to be their line, yet the NDP government in Alberta is begging and pleading that we recognize the importance of the oil industry for all Canadians.

On the one hand we have the New Democrats, who are all over the place on the issue of the environment, with a multitude of different plans, but who are not listening and being sensitive to the needs of Canada's economy. Then we have the Conservatives on the other hand, who do not have the sensitivity and do not recognize the need to work with the many different stakeholders to consider the environment when developing our natural resources or commodities.

Let us use a very specific example. Stephen Harper, the former prime minister, was prime minister for 10 years. How many pipelines did Stephen Harper actually construct or provide with the opportunity that would see those pipelines move forward, which would have taken our resources to Asian markets, to the coastline? The answer is zero, not one. There was not one inch of pipeline from the Conservative Party.

• (1730)

If we listen to the Alberta members of Parliament, we would think they were building four or five pipelines a year, as if they truly cared about them. However, for the 10 years they were in government, they did not build one inch of pipeline. Within months of this government taking office, it put into place—

An hon. member: That's not true.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: That is the truth. If we look at the first few months of this government, after being elected in 2015, we started to put into place a process that respected the environment, that ensured indigenous people would have a voice, that there would be a process that would allow for the expansion of getting our resources to market. The Conservative Harper government failed at doing this.

Government Orders

Why should we listen to the Conservatives when it comes to a pipeline when they failed so miserably on it? We do not need to be lectured by the Conservative members about the jobs in the province of Alberta. This is a government that cares about what is happening in all regions of our country, including my home province of Manitoba, the province of Alberta, the province of Quebec and all the different provinces in Atlantic Canada. We are concerned about all provinces and territories. We encourage economic growth wherever we can. We have been very successful.

Stephen Harper was the prime minister for 10 years and his government created somewhere in the neighbourhood of just over a million jobs. In the last three years and a few months, in working with small businesses and Canadians in all regions of the country, we have seen 800,000-plus new jobs created in Canada. In good part it has a lot to do with the budgetary announcements we have brought forward.

The member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan talked about the issue of taxation and how it had an impact on sustainability in Canada, referring to the Canadian economy. This government has done more to cultivate and encourage the growth of our economy. From day one, we have been a government focused on Canada's middle class and have taken policy initiatives that would enhance and give strength to the middle class. We understand and appreciate that the stronger and healthier Canada's middle class is, the healthier our economy will be, not to mention the many different social aspects.

The previous speaker talked about waste, the environment and how in Montreal a considerable amount of waste unfortunately had to be dumped into the St. Lawrence. There is a reason why it had to be dumped. Before I go into that reason, let me assure the members opposite that it is not the first time waste has been dropped into a waterway. Even under Stephen Harper, it was dropped into the waterways. What did Stephen Harper do to deal with that issue? It was unlike this government that has invested and made commitments of billions of dollars to build Canada's infrastructure.

By building our infrastructure, we are going to be in a better position in the future to prevent the dumping of sewage in any form into our waterways. That is a very difficult decision. However, to try to give an impression that this government caused it is somewhat disingenuous and misleading.

• (1735)

For the first time, we have a government in Canada that is committed to building the infrastructure of our country and recognizing that if we want to have sustainable development in the future, a part of that sustainable development is investing in our communities, our capital infrastructure. In the last few years, this government has invested millions of dollars in water treatment centres in different areas of our great nation, so not only do we talk about it, but this government has taken specific actions. Many of those actions can be found in the budgets that have been presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Canada.

Other initiatives like the one we are talking about today are brought in through ministers to make changes to legislation. The process in bringing in this legislation has involved a great deal of background work and consultation, from consultation the minister's

staff conducted prior to introduction and first reading, to the debate process, to the committee proceedings and to third reading. Ultimately it went to the Senate, where we received more feedback, which some of my colleagues have commented on.

The legislation before us today is very positive. It is something all members should reflect on and support. Federal sustainable development strategy, objectives and reports are all positive things. Canadians expect government to look at ways in which we can encourage sustainable development in the future.

The legislation we are debating today is part of what we talked about in the last federal election. This is yet another piece of legislation that fulfills a commitment the Prime Minister made to Canadians and that the Liberal Party made to Canadians.

We recognize that there is always room to improve and ways in which we can do better. I want to pay attention to this issue, because the Conservatives in particular have raised the issue of the price on pollution. We have had so much direction not only from within Canada, but outside as well. Countries around the world have recognized the importance of assigning a price on carbon.

The first jurisdiction in Canada to move forward on this issue was in Alberta. It was the Progressive Conservative Party that moved in this direction. However, the Conservative Party in Ottawa still does not understand it. This is where the current leader falls behind Stephen Harper. Some of the people Stephen Harper had around him recognized the value of having a price on pollution, but not the current Conservative Party.

Patrick Brown was another individual who talked about the price on carbon. I am sure my colleagues remember that individual, who was a part of the Stephen Harper government. Even though the Conservative Party associates so closely with Stephen Harper and Doug Ford, it is reminiscent of the Conservative-Reform days. Maybe that is the direction they are trying to go.

• (1740)

I look forward to 2019 when we are going to be able to tell Canadians all the wonderful progressive measures that we have taken, everything from tax breaks to protecting our environment to enhancing social programs. There is so much more we would like to be able to do and maybe Canadians will allow us to continue.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed that member's speech, as humorous as it was.

In the Federal Sustainable Development Act there is a provision that deals with intergenerational equity, which effectively says the current generation will not steal from future generations. The current generation will not impose a burden on future generations in order to meet its present-day needs. Presumably by supporting this particular piece of legislation and the underlying legislation, that member supports intergenerational equity, yet his government is doing the very opposite, running huge deficits when it promised to run small deficits.

Government Orders

The Liberal government failed to deliver a balanced budget this year, in 2019, despite the Prime Minister's solemn promise. He is on record as saying he would balance the budget by 2019. He never did it. When the budget is not balanced and huge deficits are run, there will be huge debts in the future that future generations will have to pay as well as all of the interest on it that future generations will have to pay. The current generation is stealing from the future generation. How is that intergenerational equity?

How does the member square his government's appalling performance on the economy and on debt?

● (1745)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we need to recognize that the Conservative government allowed for a huge infrastructure deficit and we need to look at the reality of the cost of that infrastructure deficit. As a result of the Harper government choosing not to invest in Canada's infrastructure, there are going to be long-term cost ramifications for future generations. That is one of the reasons why our government, months into taking office, made a commitment to Canada's infrastructure. We can go beyond that and talk about some of the social infrastructures, programs in particular.

While the Conservatives would give cheques to millionaires for their children, our Canada child benefit is giving millions of dollars to Canadians. In my riding of Winnipeg North alone, it is like \$9 million a month to families that really need it. They are spending that money, which improves their disposable income.

I can justify the expenditures of this government. What I cannot justify is the lack of commitment that the Harper government had towards our infrastructure and that is—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his very long and very loud speech. He touched on a number of things but two of the most important to Canadians are the economy and the environment.

We all just returned from break and I want to share some of the feedback that I received from my constituents. I think many other members in the chamber have heard the same thing and some alarming facts.

Just last week it was reported that 46% of Canadians are \$200 away from insolvency. That does not sound like an economy that is working well for a lot of people. My hon. colleague talked about the middle class. I have not ever heard the Liberals talk about the working class. There are millions of Canadians in this country that are not doing well.

The member quoted the same figures that the Conservatives used to quote, those large macro numbers about how well Canada is doing compared to the G7. It reminds me of the phrase that when Bill Gates walks into a bar everybody is a millionaire, on average. That is not the reality here in this country. There are gaping holes between the wealthy and the poor and between the working class in this country.

I want for a moment to turn to the issue of the environment. Nobody is opposed to natural resources or the oil industry. People

are concerned about climate change and carbon emissions. With the alarming report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change telling us we have 11 years to make a 45% reduction over 2010 levels, we do not have time to waste. Expanding fossil fuel infrastructure at a time when we have to be reducing carbon emissions is something that many Canadians, me included, have a hard time understanding.

What does my hon. colleague have to say to those almost one in two Canadians who are \$200 away from going bankrupt? What does he have to say to the younger generation that is concerned about—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: In short, Mr. Speaker, I would say they have a government that is listening to what Canadians are saying.

The Prime Minister has mandated and constantly reminded members, at least on this side of the House—and we would encourage all members to do what the member said he did—to work with constituents to get a better sense of what their constituents expect from Ottawa and then bring that information to Ottawa. When that has happened, at least on the Liberal benches we have seen the development and enhancement of programs that have made a difference.

How can the member not recognize that the Canada child benefit program has lifted literally hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty? How can the member not recognize that the enhancement to the guaranteed income supplement for seniors has lifted literally thousands of people out of poverty, including the poorest seniors? As I alluded to a few minutes ago, Winnipeg North gets approximately \$9 million every month because of the children who live there, and that money enhances their living. This is a government that truly cares, and that is why we are developing positive, progressive social policies.

● (1750)

Ms. Kim Rudd (Northumberland—Peterborough South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I very much support my colleague's remarks.

We have heard a lot about deficits and we cannot forget that in nine years, Stephen Harper added \$160 billion to Canada's debt when we had the lowest growth since the 1930s, and in addition to that deficit, he left a huge infrastructure deficit, as my colleague mentioned. As the minister announced today in question period, there are over 4,000 infrastructure projects under way in this country. My riding happens to have two of them, in waste-water treatment, one just completed and the other under way, worth \$2 million. It is allowing businesses like Danby and Weston to grow and expand and allowing rural communities to grow.

I would like the member to respond to the infrastructure deficit and the opportunities that we are providing communities by answering that deficit.

Government Orders

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my colleague and friend is right on with regard to the importance of infrastructure, and she cited some very specific files within her own riding. Infrastructure has been enhanced in all regions of our country, again because this government, even going into the election, recognized the serious infrastructure deficit that Canada is facing, primarily as a direct result of the policies of Stephen Harper. That is why we had to make the types of investment and commitment that we made. If we invest in infrastructure and in Canadians, we will have a much healthier environment for all.

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with what the member opposite said about seniors. Yes, Liberals increased something, but they took a lot away from them. Seniors no longer have a tax credit to take buses. Also, the carbon tax increases the cost of their groceries, heating, everything.

When I visited a seniors home last week, a very important thing they told me is that their grandkids and kids are going to suffer because the government is going to make them pay for all the debt and mistakes the Liberal government has made.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have a few quick points. First and foremost, I recognize that it was this government, within months of being in government, that dramatically increased the guaranteed income supplement, lifting tens of thousands of the poorest seniors in all regions of Canada out of poverty. It was this government, within months, that reversed the Harper decision and returned the age of retirement from 67 to 65. Independent reports commented on how many seniors would have been put in poverty had we not made that change. We could talk about the CPP agreement between Ottawa and the provinces, ensuring that future seniors will have better retirements.

This government has done so much, and we will continue to look at ways to improve the quality of life for seniors. After all, this is the Prime Minister who appointed the first Minister of Seniors.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed listening to the speech of the member for Winnipeg North. It was all about spending, and the Liberals talk about that a lot. They spend, spend, spend. There was nothing about fiscal control. There was nothing about economic sustainability, being able to afford the things we paid for. There was nothing about reducing the tax burden on Canadians.

Therefore, it is a real pleasure to talk about the Federal Sustainable Development Act and the amendments that have been proposed. When we actually compare the provisions of the act and what the act requires against the performance of the Liberal government, we will find that this tax-and-spend Liberal government has been found wanting.

The underlying purpose of the act is to find the appropriate balance between our natural environment, our social environment and economic environment. Unfortunately, the current Liberal government does not understand where that balance should lie. In fact, if the Liberals went to section 5(b) of the act, they would find that there is a notion of intergenerational equity that requires current governments to take into account the welfare of future generations. Intergenerational equity, one of the key principles of the act, requires governments not to steal from future generations to pay for their current needs or demands.

However, when we look at the performance of the Liberal government, what does it do? It praises the Federal Sustainable Development Act, but then it incurs huge deficits when it promised not to.

I remember the last election when the Prime Minister went across the country saying he was going to run small deficits of \$10 billion. By the way, he went on to promise he was going to balance the budget by 2019, which happens to be this year. However, we know that today, in 2019, there is no balanced budget and we know that it is going to take over 20 years to balance our budget based on the direction the government is going. That does not take into account additional spending that the Liberal government is going to undertake during the election year.

What happens? There is no intergenerational equity. What the Prime Minister is asking us to do is to pay for his mistakes.

Then we have a Liberal government that is hell-bent on phasing-out Canada's oil and gas industry. The Prime Minister has deliberately wiped out projects like the northern gateway pipeline and the energy east pipeline. He has imposed additional regulatory burdens, upstream and downstream impact requirements with which foreign oil does not have to comply. Therefore, these investments are fleeing the country. Over \$100 billion of investment has fled our country over the last couple of years. Again, the Prime Minister is asking us to pay for his mistakes.

We remember the small business fiasco. We are talking about economic sustainability, social and environmental sustainability. Let us talk about small businesses. It was the Liberal government that introduced a policy that was going to harm small businesses by increasing the tax rate on those businesses to 73%. There was no apology in the House for suggesting that was what small businesses could bear. In fact, it got so bad that the Prime Minister referred to our small business sector as tax cheats. We have one million small businesses across the country and all the Prime Minister could do was to call them tax cheats. I have spoken to hundreds of them and they are angry at a prime minister who is asking them to pay for his mistakes.

I will talk a little about trade policy, because trade policy is about sustainability. It is about providing an environment in which Canadian companies can thrive within the global marketplace.

When our Conservative government finally left office in 2015, we turned over the reins to the Liberal government. At that time, Canada had strong diplomatic and trade relationships around the world.

Government Orders

• (1755)

As trade minister, I could pick up the phone and call my counterpart in pretty well any country to say we have a problem and ask if we could sit down and fix it. We could have that discussion. What does that look like today? Today, we have a trade agenda wasteland. Our diplomatic relationships around the world are in tatters. When did it start? Let us talk about it.

In Vietnam, where the Trans-Pacific Partnership was supposed to be signed, 12 countries agreed to expand trade. Eleven countries showed up in Vietnam. Everybody promised they were going to sign that agreement there. Who did not show up? There were two chairs that were empty at that meeting. Canada's trade minister did not show up. Canada's Prime Minister did not show up. What an embarrassment. Can the Prime Minister go back to Vietnam? It would be very difficult. It does not want him back there. None of the partners in the TPP want him back.

Then we see the Prime Minister travelling to China. He was going to start trade negotiations with China. Do members remember that? Unfortunately for Canada, the Prime Minister went there with a bunch of preconditions that had nothing to do with trade and told China that it was going to have to comply with these preconditions, otherwise we were not interested. China was very upset. It basically gave him a swift kick in the rear and sent him packing with his tail between his legs. What an embarrassment that was.

It did not stop there. Let us remember when he travelled to the Philippines. Canada is not a member of the East Asia Summit. The East Asia Summit was taking place in the Philippines. Our government asked to be invited, so the Prime Minister got an invitation from the President of the Philippines. He arrived on the ground there and the first thing our Prime Minister did was embarrass the Philippine president in his own country. Rather than using traditional diplomacy to raise the very serious issue of human rights, he embarrassed the president of that country in front of his own people. Do members think he is welcome in the Philippines now? That diplomatic relationship was torn asunder.

It goes on. Do members remember the Twitter diplomacy that founded our relationship with Saudi Arabia? At that time, we had tens of thousands of Saudi Arabian students studying in Canada, many of them for four and five years. While they lived here, what did they do? They would pick up many of the principles of freedom, democracy and human rights. When those students would go back to Saudi Arabia, many of them became great proponents and champions of human rights, democracy and freedom.

The Prime Minister thought it was a great idea to attack Saudi Arabia on its human rights record, and it does have a shabby human rights record, but he chose Twitter to do it, unlike our previous government, which used traditional diplomacy and tact in doing it. That relationship was torn asunder. It is costing our economy billions of dollars a year in lost revenue. The current Prime Minister wants to make you, Mr. Speaker, and all of the other Canadians across this country, pay for those mistakes.

It got worse. Do members remember the NAFTA negotiations? The Prime Minister embraced Donald Trump's offer of renegotiating NAFTA when in fact Donald Trump's ire was directed at Mexico, not

Canada. Then the Prime Minister had the audacity to promise Canadians that when he was done renegotiating NAFTA we would have a better deal than we had before. What happened? The Prime Minister totally failed us. All the experts now acknowledge that the NAFTA deal that we have today is a much lesser deal than we had before the Prime Minister got started.

It is another failure, another mistake the Prime Minister wants us to pay for. The sad thing is this. The Prime Minister had an opportunity to address the steel and aluminum tariffs that Donald Trump had imposed on Canada through these negotiations on NAFTA. Do members think he got that done? No. Those tariffs are still in place, costing Canadians hundreds of millions and perhaps billions of dollars a year.

• (1800)

Was the softwood lumber agreement resolved in those NAFTA negotiations? The Prime Minister had that opportunity. It never got done. It was a failure, a mistake the Prime Minister wants Canadians to pay for. What a shame.

Let me return to China. We have seen the China relationship deteriorate to the point that it is the worst it has ever been over the last 40 years. We have a Prime Minister who cannot manage this relationship. He sends his own friend, John McCallum, to be the ambassador there, and then Mr. McCallum embarrasses Canadians by interfering in what should be an arm's-length legal extradition process for Meng Wanzhou, a Huawei executive. Our ambassador in China undermined the rule of law in Canada and undermined our ability to defend that rule of law here at home and abroad. Who suffers? It is people like Michael Kovrig, who is in prison in China for bogus reasons.

I know my friend here from P.E.I. is mocking us, but my own constituent, Robert Schellenberg, who is on death row in China, is the one who is going to have to pay for the Prime Minister's mistakes. It is all the same: failure after failure.

I could talk about our immigration system, because that is part of the social sustainability piece of this legislation. What do we have in our immigration system? We have eroded public confidence, because the Prime Minister will not enforce the law. What has happened here is those who obey the law are waiting in line while others jump the queue, costing the federal, provincial and municipal governments—for example, the City of Toronto—millions upon millions of dollars in additional housing, law enforcement and other costs, and the Prime Minister wants us to pay for his mistakes.

Government Orders

Let us talk about the environment. The Prime Minister was elected on a platform that said he was going to come forward with a pan-Canadian climate change plan. I remember being in Vancouver. The Vancouver declaration was signed by everyone except Brad Wall. The Prime Minister promised we would meet the Paris targets. By the way, I was in Paris too when that agreement was signed. People were expecting the Prime Minister to meet those targets. Today we know that the Liberal government is nowhere close to meeting its Paris targets. It talks a big game on the environment. Our environment minister gets up pretty regularly in the House and proclaims what a great job the Liberals are doing on the environment and that they are going to meet their Paris targets, when the Parliamentary Budget Officer says they will not meet the targets, when Canada's Commissioner of the Environment says they will not meet the targets, when the United Nations itself says Canada will not meet the targets. It is a failure, and who pays for that? We pay for the Prime Minister's mistakes.

I say all of this because this is of course an election year. Sustainability is a critical piece of what we do in Canada. We do have to find the right balance between our social environment, our natural environment and the economic environment in which we all operate and on which our families depend.

We cannot afford another four years of this Liberal government's failures. We saw what happened in Ontario with 15 years of the Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty governments driving their economy into the ground and driving up electricity costs to the highest level in North America. Is that what we want to repeat in Canada? No, we do not. That is why we cannot afford another four years.

• (1805)

What a lot of Canadians do not know is that the same crew who ran Ontario for 15 years and ran Ontario into the ground, many of that same crew are in the Prime Minister's office today, starting with Gerald Butts. Do we trust him to get our economy right? Do we trust him to get sustainability right? No, we do not. The problem is, if we have four more years of failure and four more years of a Prime Minister who wants us to pay for his mistakes, we will have a disaster.

We have not had a government as incompetent as this for many, many decades. Canadians should expect more. They should expect better.

I say this to Canadians: As we approach October, measure the Prime Minister against the promises he made. Did he actually deliver on his promises or is the road littered with broken promises? Balanced budgets was a broken promise. What about electoral reform? Remember how the last election was going to be the last one under first past the post? How did that go? It was a broken promise.

As we approach this election in October, Canadians need to take note of what the Prime Minister has actually done in this country to undermine our economic prosperity. He has effectively shut down our oil and gas sector. He has effectively shut down our pipeline construction. We have seen General Motors bailing out of Canada, and General Electric bailing out of Canada. What is happening? Why does the rest of the world not have confidence in Canada the

way it used to under the former Conservative government? We had lots of investment coming into Canada.

Today, as I said earlier, we have lost about hundred billion dollars of investment, just over a period of a couple of years. That flow of investment out of Canada into places like the United States and elsewhere around the world is going to hurt job creation in this country. We are going to see that happen. It is going to require governments to raise taxes. Who pays those taxes? It is not only this generation. If we have deficits and if we have debts, future governments are going to have to continue to raise taxes to pay off those debts and deficits, and the interest on those debts.

I am coming right back, full circle, to the notion of intergenerational equity. It is something that is basically the linchpin of the Federal Sustainable Development Act. It ensures that future generations will continue to have the opportunity for prosperity and a clean environment that our current generation has had. The Prime Minister is undermining all of that through high taxes, high deficits and high debts. Who is going to pay for those mistakes? The Prime Minister wants us to pay for those mistakes.

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Ed Fast: I hear some chirping from the corner here from P.E. I. The Liberal members continue to do this. At the end of the day, who suffers from all of this heckling from the Liberal side? It is Canadians. It is future generations of Canadians. That is the sad choice that we have before us.

Let me wind up by saying this. Canadians do have an opportunity to get sustainability right. They will not get it right under the Liberal government but they will have an opportunity to make a decision in October whether they want to elect a Conservative government that is going to take seriously the fiscal challenges, economic challenges and competitiveness challenges that face our companies, including our small businesses, take seriously the environment challenges that face our country and face the globe, and take seriously the social challenges that this Liberal government is not addressing in any way.

• (1810)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one would think that was an election speech, because what we heard from the Conservatives was a lot of misinformation. If that party wants to talk about facts, Stephen Harper added \$150 billion to the national debt.

In terms of small business, look at the last fall economic statement, whereby we faced head on the challenges from the United States and increased capital cost allowances so that businesses in this country could move ahead.

The member talked about the CPTPP. I would ask the member this. Who signed and negotiated it at the end of the day? Who did the final agreement on the CPTPP to accept that agreement and negotiate a good agreement, which the Conservatives failed to negotiate? It was the minister on this side of the House who did that.

The future in this country is going to be a result of the Liberal government. Do not listen to the malarkey we hear from the members on the other side, because they are just playing politics and giving false information, which I am surprised to hear from that member.

Government Orders

• (1815)

Hon. Ed Fast: Mr. Speaker, that is pretty rich coming from the member for Malpeque. I was the trade minister when the TPP was negotiated. All the key elements of the original TPP were incorporated into the final agreement. When the United States bailed out, the other 11 parties said it was worthwhile moving ahead and finalizing it.

The Liberals want to challenge us on trade. When our former Conservative government was elected in 2006, how many trade agreements did we have with countries around the world? We had trade agreements with five countries: the United States, Mexico, Israel, Costa Rica and Chile. When we were finished 10 years later, we had completed the most ambitious and successful trade agenda this country had ever seen. We had trade agreements with 51 countries around the world, including CETA and including the TPP, which was a Conservative negotiation that took place successfully.

We will not take any lessons from the Liberals on trade.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have been following this debate and the level of hypocrisy is over the top. I recall all those trade deals that the Conservatives signed. What did they erase? All of the environmental provisions. I worked for the original environment commission in Montreal. I will note that in the new trade deal with the U.S., the Liberals undermined the environment in that deal too. There is a lot of hypocrisy here about genuinely acting on the words.

I would actually like to speak to Bill C-57. I know it might come as a surprise, as everybody is doing his or her electioneering here. What is important is that it is one thing to bring forward a bill and it is another thing to enact it. However, it is another thing to actually deliver the mandate and responsibilities under that bill.

The previous Liberal government and the previous Conservative government, as well as the present Liberal government, have all abjectly failed to deliver on the responsibilities of sustainable development. It is not me saying this. It is the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, who is appointed and retained in that position by the current Liberal government to review how well the government is delivering on its responsibilities.

It is also important to point out that in addition to the Sustainable Development Act, there is a second law. I would remind this place that a cabinet directive is binding law. We proved that with the Friends of the Oldman decision which involved a directive by cabinet on environmental assessment before we had the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. We proved in the Supreme Court that cabinet directives were legally binding.

There has been a cabinet directive in place on environmental assessment of policy, plan and programs for decades. However, successive Conservative and Liberal governments have abjectly failed to deliver on that as well. That comes in the reports from the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The Liberals, of course, signed on, yet again. They love to go to these international meetings. They signed on to the sustainable development agenda 2030, with 17 goals. They signed onto that in September 2015. Maybe it was the Conservatives who did that. They committed to 169 targets and 230 indicators.

There were a lot of goals in that international agreement. We need to note here that despite an amendment that I tabled at committee, the government refused to incorporate any reference to the UN commitment in the bill we are discussing today, the sustainable development 2030 agenda. So much for the commitment.

I had wanted to raise this with a number of the speakers who stood, the Conservatives criticizing the Liberals, the Liberals criticizing the Conservatives. Since 2015, and I am only starting at 2015, the commissioner has delivered failing grades in her audits of government commitments to actually deliver on the responsibilities, both under the Sustainable Development Act and the cabinet directive.

In the fall of 2015, she found abject failure by four departments audited to even apply the cabinet directive, zero assessments delivered for 488 proposals to the fisheries minister and only one out of over a 1,000 proposals to the minister of agriculture. In 2016, she found only 23% of proposals audited had submitted the required strategic environmental assessment. In 2017, she found a mere 20% compliance by federal departments.

Last year, in 2018, the commissioner's latest report found that the Government of Canada, the Liberal government, had failed to even develop a formal approach to implementing the 2030 agenda and the goals, including a very narrow interpretation of sustainable development. We heard that today in the debate, a pretty narrow discussion of what was actually in there. There is no federal government structure, and we are not going to see it in the bill either.

Interestingly, the bill continues to give responsibility to the Minister of Environment and yet it is another minister who goes off to the UN to speak to the bill as if it is his responsibility. There is a lot of confusion out there among Canadians about who in the government is actually responsible for delivering on the responsibilities for sustainable development.

The commissioner found there was very limited national consultation and engagement, no national implementation plan, few national targets and no system in place to measure, monitor or report on national targets for sustainable development.

We have heard a lot of blathering in here today from the Liberals about how important the environment and the economy are. However, where is the commitment to actually deliver on those responsibilities?

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1820)

Eventually we are going to have a debate on the bill. Interestingly, a good number of the amendments that are coming forward from the Senate to this place are exactly the same amendments that I put forward, which the Liberals rejected. So much for “we're all in this together” in committee.

I would note one amendment that is most interesting. The Senate presented to this place a series of three amendments, two of which were accepted. The third one the Green Party and I actually tabled as an amendment to the bill because the government, in its wisdom, talks about being environmentally thoughtful in its spending, in procurement, but it would remove the requirement that is in law right now that the government actually consider sustainable development when it is procuring.

Let us think about that. It was almost \$5 billion to buy a pipeline. We might think that the government thought about whether it was a wise investment economically and environmentally. Where is the strategic environmental assessment for that purchase? How about the many infrastructure banks the government is setting up for private enterprise here and in other countries? Did it do a strategic environmental assessment as per the cabinet directive? No.

The question here is this: Where is the real commitment by the government of the day to generally deliver on these big promises it made to Canadians and the big promises it makes when going to UN meetings?

I attended the consultation at the UN, the big summit last summer. The government sent a big delegation. At the last second, it invited youth but there was only a handful who could afford to come. Therefore, we had a call for better consultation and engagement across Canada so that everybody can participate in this discussion. However, when we look at the goals, we are not just talking about the economy or the environment. When we look at those 17 goals, they cover everything. They cover indigenous rights, women's rights, agriculture and water. I am not hearing any debate in the House about the breadth of what we have committed to in the 2030 goals. The Liberals refused to reference those in the bill before us.

There is a second matter the Liberals refused to reference, despite the amendments I tabled at committee. They have refused to incorporate into the bill the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is one of the goals under the 2030 sustainable development goals. They abjectly refused to specifically reference that international commitment, despite the fact that the former justice minister and attorney general actually committed before the Assembly of First Nations that, going forward, her Liberal government would ensure that the United Nations declaration would be incorporated into every federal law. Therefore, they have broken that promise too.

It is all very nice that we have some amendments coming from the Senate, but they are basically pro forma. They are simply saying that we need to update the bill so that it is the same as the current Auditor General Act. However, when it comes to substantive measures, like being required to actually consider sustainable development when we are making major procurement decisions and when making major recommendations to cabinet, then no, they are abjectly failing. I

would have liked to hear anybody in the government of the day stand up and say that, going forward, they were going to finally deliver on their responsibilities. However, I did not hear that once today.

To conclude, it was my honour to speak to the bill again. I remain committed to actually having a government in Canada that is sincere about delivering on its international commitments.

• (1825)

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

During the ringing of the bells:

Hon. Mark Holland: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the vote be deferred until tomorrow at the end of Government Orders.

The Deputy Speaker: Accordingly, the recorded division is deferred until tomorrow at the end of the time provided for Government Orders.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect if you were to canvass the House, you would find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:30 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

HEALTH

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in negotiating the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement, NAFTA 2.0, the Liberals failed a lot of people, including our dairy farmers, our chicken farmers, our egg farmers and our turkey farmers. However, they also failed millions of sick people, who will have to pay more for treatment under this bad deal.

Adjournment Proceedings

This deal raises the price of drugs for certain diseases, and the public is finding that a very hard pill to swallow. Canada gave in to the U.S. and agreed to extend market protection on pharmaceutical patents for an additional two years. This market protection covers important drugs, including drugs used to treat cancer, arthritis and Crohn's disease. The agreement extends the term of pharmaceutical patents from eight years to ten. In practical terms, that means Canadians will have to wait two more years before they can get cheaper generic versions of the drugs they need.

Does anyone really believe that people living with these diseases can wait two years for affordable medication?

This bad deal directly affects millions of Canadians across the country, including millions of seniors. Ironically, the Liberals are constantly boasting about standing up for our seniors. The reality is that seniors often struggle to afford medication, and this bad deal just adds one more burden.

How can the government still claim that it signed a good deal? I do not know.

This is a bad deal for Canadians who will have to pay more for their medication. It is also a bad deal for employers and governments whose drug plans will have to pay tens of millions of dollars more a year to cover the cost of these medications.

The government keeps saying that it is going to improve access to prescription drugs and reduce the amount that governments have to pay for them. Unfortunately, that is not what it has achieved by making concessions that reduce access to essential drugs and will increase costs for those who pay for them.

This deal includes provisions to extend drug patents. Under these provisions, patents could be extended by several years to compensate for the time between filing the patent and getting the drug to market. That will delay the introduction of generic drugs into the market, which will keep drug prices high and unaffordable for millions of Canadians and increase the cost of our health care system. The Liberals claim that they are in favour of some form of pharmacare program, but this deal makes drugs even more costly.

Canada needs a universal pharmacare program more than ever, to lower the cost of drugs and to ensure that everyone has access to the medications they need. We are the only country with a medicare system that does not include prescription drugs. One in 10 Canadians cannot afford prescription drugs. Every year, nearly 3.5 million Canadians struggle to pay for their medications, which are costing more and more. They cannot afford the medications they need. This government is simply studying what has already been documented. It is unacceptable.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer's report shows that a national pharmacare program could save a lot of money, not to mention the benefits for those who are on medication. Our seniors should not have to choose between paying rent and paying for medication.

If we implement a national pharmacare program, we will reduce inequality and ensure that Quebeckers will never have to pay for private insurance that sometimes costs more than they can afford. Ninety percent of Canadians support a national pharmacare program.

Canadians want this, and the government would save billions of dollars. One has to wonder what the government is waiting for.

When will the government make a real difference for families, seniors and businesses by setting up a national pharmacare program?

• (1830)

[English]

Mr. John Oliver (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to participate in the important discussion on prescription drugs. Our government is committed to strengthening health care and supporting the health of Canadians. This includes taking concrete action to improve the affordability, accessibility and appropriate prescribing of the medications Canadians need.

Our government recognizes affordable access to prescription drugs is a challenge for some Canadians. For too many, existing drug coverage programs are not working. Our government welcomed the report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer on the federal cost of a national pharmacare program and the Standing Committee on Health's extensive study of this issue.

Budget 2017 provided \$140.3 million over five years and \$18.2 million ongoing annually for Health Canada and other federal agencies to lower drug prices and improve access to prescription drugs. As part of that work, the government is proposing amendments to the patented medicines regulations that would give the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board the tools and information needed to protect all Canadians from excessive patented drug prices.

Our government has also worked to lower drug costs through the pan-Canadian pharmaceutical alliance. By combining the bargaining power of federal, provincial and territorial governments, the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance saved over \$1.3 billion in 2017 through price reductions for patented and generic drugs.

We have worked to improve access to orphan drugs by launching the regulatory review of drugs and devices initiative. This is a major effort to improve the availability of prescription drugs, including drugs for rare diseases.

Our government also recognizes inappropriate prescribing of medications creates risks and unnecessary waste in the health care system. To remedy this, we are working with partners to promote best practices in prescribing and use of drugs.

Adjournment Proceedings

Finally, budget 2018 announced the creation of the advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare. Chaired by Dr. Eric Hoskins, this council will evaluate a range of options and provide recommendations on how to implement national pharmacare in a manner that is affordable for Canadians and their families, employers and governments. It will report to the federal ministers of health and finance and is expected to deliver its advice in the spring of 2019.

The measures I have outlined here today in regard to the council and improving affordability, accessibility and appropriate prescribing are significant. They have the potential to move Canada toward a more sustainable and responsive pharmaceutical management system, no matter what form it takes in the end.

• (1835)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy: Mr. Speaker, on January 15, I hosted a luncheon on the theme, “15 weeks is not enough”.

This monthly event in my riding, called the “Toast populaire”, is organized by a coalition of community organizations and unions called Solidarité Populaire Richelieu-Yamaska. During the event, Marie-Hélène Dubé and Mélanie Pelletier, the latter a resident of my riding, talked about how, even as they battled cancer and degenerative disease, they often chose not to buy their medications because they could not afford them.

It is unacceptable that our fellow citizens should choose not to buy the drugs they need because we are too slow to take action. We need to act now. I heard what the parliamentary secretary said, but the government is taking too long and is not doing enough.

Once again, when will the government introduce a national pharmacare program?

[*English*]

Mr. John Oliver: Mr. Speaker, our government has demonstrated its commitment to improving the accessibility and affordability of prescription drugs, including joining with provinces and territories to negotiate drug prices through the pan-Canadian pharmaceutical alliance, but we recognize that there is an opportunity to do even more.

The advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare is engaging with Canadians and assessing options to provide our government with independent advice on how best to implement a national pharmacare program in a manner that is affordable for Canadians, employers and governments. The work of the council will be fundamental in ensuring that Canadians have access to the drug therapies they need at an affordable cost. I look forward to the council's final report next spring, which will guide the government in moving forward on national pharmacare.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish you and all my colleagues a happy new year as I stand in this brand new chamber here in West Block.

I am pleased to start off in fulfilling my role as the critic for agriculture by following up on a question I brought up in Centre

Block last year. During that time, I asked about the USMCA agreement and its effect on our supply managed sectors, and the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs stood and gave me an answer.

The Liberals had consistently talked about not making any concessions in the negotiations on supply management, but unfortunately, when the details of the deal were announced, we did get the answers, and we did find out that there were some notable concessions made.

This has been a thorn in the side of the supply managed sectors through all the trade agreements, going back to CETA, the CPTPP and now the USMCA. Time and time again, whether it has been a Conservative or a Liberal government, they have been told that the government would be standing up for the sectors. Then they get the details, and they are let down.

Just how much are they being let down by? Let us look at the individual sectors. The egg farmers in Canada, under the USMCA, have to allow an intake of 10 million dozen eggs in the first year, and the export number will gain 1% every year for 10 years.

The chicken sector is going to see double the previous concessions, which is going to result in more than 12 million kilograms of chicken coming into Canada. Turkey is going to see additional access equivalent to 3.5% of the previous year's Canadian turkey production.

The dairy sector is going to see an additional 3.6%. In fact, the Dairy Farmers of Canada has now estimated that once all three trade deals come into effect, total dairy imports will make up 18% of the Canadian dairy market.

When I speak to Canadians and speak to farmers in my riding, and I have no doubt that this happens right across the country, there is an inherent interest in buying local goods. Time and time again, we see answers within the 80% to 90% affirmative rate that Canadians want to buy local. Supply management is the system that allows us to control price and control production, but it depends on that third very important pillar of import control. If we do not have that, we are undermining the entire system, because it is like a three-legged stool. It cannot stand unless all three pillars are stable and strong.

One can stand in the House and say that one supports supply management, but we judge a government not by its words but by its actions. Time and again, these farmers have been let down. The word they have used to describe it is “pawns”. They feel that they have been pawns in the negotiations. For those of us who like to play chess, we know that the pawn is the unit that is most often sacrificed at the beginning of the game to advance a player's interest, and that is precisely what has happened to our supply managed farmers time and time again.

Adjournment Proceedings

To follow up on the general theme of what my question was last year, I am wondering, with regard to our supply managed sector, if the parliamentary secretary could go into a bit more detail on this compensation package. Why is it that the Liberals have continually promised one thing and then done another? Are they not seeing through the hypocrisy their own government is guilty of? Have they not been listening to supply managed farmers, who have really had it with the Liberal government's false promises and it leading them down the garden path?

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford for raising this important question.

The Government of Canada fully supports Canadian dairy, egg and poultry farmers and our supply management system. Supply management is a system that our farmers chose for themselves and it has been working well for many years. It benefits the Canadian economy and I can assure hon. members that we protected and defended it and will continue to do so.

Our supply management system is viewed as a model of stability around the world. It guarantees an income for farmers, a predictable supply for processors, and top quality dairy, egg, and poultry products for consumers. Canada's dairy, poultry, and egg producers and processors play a key role in ensuring the prosperity and sustainable growth of our country and are an integral part of Canadian agriculture. Production and processing activities contribute to many services and industries that support local economies. CETA upholds the three pillars of supply management: production control, price control, and import control. The government understands the importance of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector to our economy, trade, and jobs.

Our negotiators worked hard to protect the interests of Canadian agriculture throughout the negotiation process. Promoting trade and maintaining our supply management system are not mutually exclusive. Canada has always signed free trade agreements with major trading partners that are good for Canadians. None of these agreements have threatened the three pillars of supply management. On the contrary, our government has defended our supply management system from strong American attempts to see it dismantled. Through economic agreements such as CETA, the CPTPP and the USMCA, the most important trade agreements in the history of Canada, we have defended, protected and maintained our supply management system. On that point, the government has formed working groups with dairy, egg and poultry farmers that will discuss the details of those new agreements and collaborate on developing strategies to help them adapt, innovate and remain competitive. These working groups meet regularly and are really making progress. We look forward to discussing the results of their work.

• (1845)

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the parliamentary secretary, I enjoy his company. I sit with him at the agriculture committee. However, the message he just delivered in the

House about import controls and defending supply management is completely at odds with what supply-managed farmers are telling me directly. They have seen a total failure in the Liberal government's ability to stand up for them in negotiations.

We are a nation of 35 million people. Our farmers can easily supply the Canadian domestic market, and we are such a minuscule market compared with the United States. I do not see why time and again our market has to suffer and pay the price for another jurisdiction's overproduction problems. The United States needs to get its house in order and figure out why it is producing too many eggs, too much chicken and too much dairy, but time and again, we are the ones that have to pay the price. It is our farmers who pay the price.

I for one am sick of being led down the garden path, being told one thing only to have something completely different happen. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary could give some details on the working group's progress on the compensation package, because I know a lot of farmers are waiting for this information.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant: Mr. Speaker, once again, supply management is an integral part of Canadian agriculture. I can guarantee that we have protected and defended it and that we will continue to do so. Trade is vital to the success of our agriculture and agri-food sector. That is why the government is seeking to expand market opportunities and promote the interests of Canadian farmers by negotiating new trade agreements and modernizing existing ones. The government is also committed to working with the dairy, egg and poultry industries to find the path forward that will ensure that our supply managed industries remain strong, stable and competitive in the long term. There is no denying the government's support for supply management and we will continue with this approach.

The government has established working groups with dairy, egg and poultry producers to develop strategies to help them adapt, innovate and remain competitive. These working groups meet regularly and are making good progress.

[*English*]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise for the first time on this historic day, our first day inside the new chamber inside West Block. It is quite a stunning, beautiful building. I am very thankful to all who had a hand in creating this space for all of us to come and serve in.

As international trade critic, I rose in the House months ago to ask the Prime Minister where the Liberal progressive trade agenda had gone. In signing the new NAFTA, we have given up so much, including damaging hits to supply management, the increased cost of drugs, and our only possible chance to get rid of the steel and aluminum tariffs, which are crippling.

Adjournment Proceedings

The new NAFTA is not the win-win-win that the Liberals promised. I cannot get a straight answer from anyone on how they think this deal, in which we gave up so much, is going to benefit Canadians.

Farmers in Essex know that the Liberals, like the Conservatives before them, have thrown them under the tractor when it comes to trade. Dairy farmers have become the loser in every trade deal that we are signing—CETA, CPTPP and now the new NAFTA. After being told repeatedly by the Liberals that they would defend supply management, how can any farm family in Canada believe anything this Liberal government has to say to them? Not only did we give up market percentage, which we know will continue to be cracked open with the sunset clause—another thing the Liberals promised they would not agree to—but the Liberals somehow have managed to tie the hands of dairy farmers from exporting also. The new NAFTA actually sets export levels lower than last year's levels. How much more can farm families take from the current Liberal government?

It is shocking the way the Liberals have sold out our farm families. I know that the Liberal member will stand in this House and want us to believe that after selling our supply-managed farmers down the river, they will now provide them with some form of compensation. As farmers across Canada are saying, “We do not want the government's money for selling our farms; we want to keep their farms healthy and thriving.”

This model is not working, and Canadians are not happy. People in my riding of Essex want safe, local milk products, and they take pride in knowing where they come from. They know that farming is the backbone of rural economies. Without successful, thriving farms, we risk not just our food security, which is enough of an issue on its own, but the livelihoods of our small towns like the ones I represent in Essex, which have become economically tied to farming communities and families.

They also know that we are talking about the quality of milk products. We are looking for the little blue cow and making sure that the choices we make for our families are ones we can trust. Canadians do not want to wonder if the milk products have bovine growth hormone or antibiotics; they want to know that they are choosing safe local food.

I want to talk about the automotive sector for a minute, because I am sure that the government member will stand up after me and talk about how amazing this deal is for the auto sector. We have to look no further than Oshawa right now to know that no matter the language in a trade agreement, corporations will continue to do as they please, keeping the tilt of jobs from Canada and the United States toward Mexico.

After the devastating announcement at GM in Oshawa, Canadians are learning that no amount of language in free trade deals, including the new NAFTA, will stop corporations from leaving Canada and heading to Mexico, where they are taking advantage of a low-wage economy and a country that is not respecting the environment. Workers are left to fend for themselves, despite the fact that the Liberals will say that this agreement is so good for the automotive sector.

Where are the Liberals when auto workers are fighting for their jobs in Oshawa? They are certainly not on the front lines. We hear absolute crickets from them. As proud as they say they are about the new NAFTA, where is that pride in standing up for auto workers today who are out on the lines, fighting for their jobs, fighting for the community of Oshawa, and all of the impact that it will have across the province of Ontario?

These are just a few of the reasons this deal is not the win-win-win that was promised and why working people and farm families continue to be an afterthought in trade agreements that are nothing more than corporate sweetheart deals.

My question is this: Why do the Liberals and the Conservatives keep signing trade agreements that hurt the working class and farmers?

● (1850)

Mr. John Oliver (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our priority since the beginning of NAFTA negotiations has always been to get a good deal for Canadian workers, businesses and families. I am proud to say that with the new Canada-United States-Mexico agreement, our government stood firm and secured that good deal for Canada.

This agreement will be good for our economy, good for Canadian families and good for the middle class. It will safeguard more than \$2 billion a day in cross-border trade and tariff-free access for more than 70% of Canadian exports. The new NAFTA agreement reinforces the strong economic ties between Canada, Mexico and the United States, while also recognizing the importance of inclusive trade by including key outcomes in areas such as labour and the environment, as well as gender and indigenous peoples. It preserves Canada's preferential access to the U.S. market, while updating and modernizing the old NAFTA agreement in areas such as digital trade, telecommunications and anti-corruption. Importantly, it means Canadian workers and their families will enjoy greater opportunities than ever before.

The member opposite will be happy to know that with the new NAFTA agreement, we have the strongest labour chapter of any trade agreement that Canada is party to. The agreement's labour chapter aims to level the playing field on labour standards and working conditions in North America, and contains commitments to ensure that national laws and policies provide protection for fundamental principles and rights at work. The new agreement also contains enforceable provisions that protect women's rights, minority rights and indigenous rights, and environmental protections that are the strongest in any Canadian trade agreement to date.

Adjournment Proceedings

The comprehensive environment chapter includes ambitious environmental provisions, including core obligations for parties to maintain high levels of environmental protection and robust environmental governance. It also introduces new commitments to address global environmental challenges, such as illegal wildlife trade, illegal fishing and the depletion of fish stocks, species at risk, conservation of biological diversity, ozone-depleting substances and marine pollution.

Moreover, for the first time in a Canadian free trade agreement, the outcome incorporates a general exception that clearly confirms that the government can adopt or maintain measures it deems necessary to fulfill its legal obligations to indigenous peoples. As Perry Bellegarde said, “The provisions addressing Indigenous Peoples in the [deal] make it the most inclusive international trade agreement for Indigenous peoples to date”.

As constituents in Essex can also appreciate, the new NAFTA is a great deal for Canada's car sector and southwestern Ontario. The new rules of origin will work in favour of Canada's high-wage auto workers. We also have a gold-plated insurance policy that protects our auto industry from U.S. tariffs. Not only will it level the playing field for auto workers in cities such as Windsor and Oshawa, but it can help secure their future.

The new NAFTA deal is good for Canada's economic prosperity and good for middle-class Canadians. We are moving forward on a deal that works for the middle class and for people working hard to join it. We are proud of the good deal that was achieved for Canadians.

• (1855)

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, the NDP remains steadfast in our support for preserving the integrity of supply management.

Unlike Liberals and Conservatives, the NDP believes that Canadians should not have to make dairy concessions in any trade deal. Negotiating with Donald Trump is not easy, but the Liberals have been bullied into a bad deal instead of fighting for a fair deal that is good for people.

Fair trade must support local and small family farms, as well as rural communities like mine in Essex. The new NAFTA is a failure for these hard-working Canadians.

Mr. John Oliver: Mr. Speaker, we said that we would stand up for Canadian values and protect our national interest and that is exactly what we did. The new Canada-United States-Mexico agreement means Canadian workers and their families will enjoy greater opportunities than ever before.

The leader of the NDP agrees. He celebrated the deal during a cocktail reception in Ottawa. The NDP member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, who is also the NDP Quebec lieutenant, called the new NAFTA “the best deal possible”.

This agreement delivers on what we promised: future growth and job opportunities, stability for the economy and the defence of millions of Canadian workers. This outcome preserves the key elements of NAFTA, while also modernizing and improving the agreement, and providing stability and predictability for Canadian businesses and workers. This is a great deal for Canada and for Canadians.

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:58 p.m.)

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